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ROBERTA SARAH TWYFORD**



J. M. de Brito
Missionary in Core.

Beheaded for the Faith in Corea,
March 8, 1866

FOR THE FAITH

LIFE OF
JUST DE BRETENIÈRES

*Martyred in Korea
March 8, 1866*



ROBERTA SARAH TWYFORD
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PREFACE.

Shortly after Monsignor John J. Dunn of New York began his epoch-making work for the cause of foreign missions he published a Life of Just de Bretenières under the title of "A Martyr of Our Own Day." Several thousand copies were printed and found interested readers in many sections of the English-speaking world. No plates were made and the edition is now out of print.

In the meantime, Father Appert, a professor at the College of St. Francis de Sales in Dijon, France, prepared under the direction of his Superior, Father Christian de Bretenières, the young martyr's brother, a new and more complete Life.

In a letter which I received from France while the work of Father Appert was in preparation, Father Christian de Bretenières wrote:

"As to the new Life of my reverend brother, I would say to you that it is coming slowly.

"The author is most of all anxious to get together some new and interesting documents. He is in correspondence with many persons, including important witnesses and especially the Bishop of Seoul and his missionaries in Korea.

"The work promises to be new from many points of view."

It is this Life which Miss Gilmore has translated; and as one who has been privileged to meet the martyr's brother in France and later to visit, in Korea, the scene of the martyrdom, I desire in this foreword to express my apprecia-

tion of the present volume and the hope that it will fulfill its purpose—to raise up Catholic souls who will push the Standard of the Cross further into the regions now held by the hosts of Satan.

JAMES ANTHONY WALSH,
Maryknoll, Ossining, N. Y.

"Whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call upon him, in whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they be sent, as it is written: How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, of them that bring glad tidings of good things!"
—Rom. X, 13-15.

FOR THE FAITH

JUST DE BRETENIÈRES

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND EARLY CHILDHOOD.

A young priest, passing St. Peter's church in Chalon-sur-Saône on the morning of July first, 1829, was surprised to see a crowd gathered about its doors, and stopping he asked the reason for the excitement. A great wedding was being solemnized within, the people told him: Anna de Montcoy was marrying Edmond de Bretenières,¹ son of the first chairman of the Royal Court of Appeals of Dijon; and the villagers vied with one another in telling him of the exalted dignity of both families and the extent of their fortunes. As for Mademoiselle de Montcoy, one and all loved her and could not say enough in her praise. The young priest was not greatly interested in the information showered upon him, and the impression he received was of a marriage richer in the things of earth than in those of heaven. He entered the church to say a little prayer for the young couple, and left it convinced that their

¹ Pronounced Bret-on-yair.

union would be signally blessed by God. Some years afterwards this priest was made pastor of St. Peter's in Chalon-sur-Saône. He became the friend, confidant, and spiritual director of M. and Mme. de Bretenières, and later of their sons.

Mademoiselle de Montcoy had wealth, beauty, and social position; she had, also, ideals so high that, as a very young girl, she had thirsted for sacrifice and penance, and longed for a life given to God and Him alone. To become a Carmelite had been the dearest wish of her heart. Mme. de Montcoy, a good woman and a wise one, understood her daughter thoroughly, and she doubted the reality of her religious vocation. Following her mother's advice the girl became engaged to Edmond de Bretenières.

In mind and soul the young man was worthy of her. On leaving college he had obtained his father's permission to study art. At Dijon, and later at Paris, in the studios of well known masters, he had been faithful to the traditions of a family unfalteringly loyal to the Faith and true to its teaching. Kind, courteous, high-minded, reserved in his friendships, devoted to his work: such was young Edmond de Bretenières. At the desire of his father he had laid aside the artistic work he loved and accepted a political position which had taken him successively to Vassy, Châtillon-sur-Seine and Chalons-sur-Saône, where he met and learned to love Anna de Montcoy.

Their marriage was blessed by a son, but while they were rejoicing over his birth he slipped away

from them to heaven. Shortly afterward the Revolution of 1830 placed Louis Philippe on France's unsteady throne, and unwilling to serve under a government which he did not like M. de Bretenières resigned his office, and he and his fair young wife travelled through Switzerland, Italy, Germany and Greece. The political troubles of the day weighed lightly on their young hearts, but that the passing years brought them no other child was a sorrow deep and ever present.

Mme. de Bretenières prayed without ceasing that God would send a little one to fill their empty cradle and lonely hearts, and eight and a half years after the death of her first child, on February twenty-eighth, 1838, a second son was born to her at Chalons-sur-Saône. He was baptized on the same day, receiving for patrons our Blessed Mother and Saints Just, Simon, and Anthony.

As he developed little Just showed himself to be straightforward, obedient, and natural, affectionate but undemonstrative, master of himself to a degree unusual in a child, and remarkably thoughtful, tender, and sympathetic. Fond of play as are all healthy children, he deeply loved prayer and the things of God. His grandfather, a victim of rheumatism, was confined to his chair and often suffered excruciating pain. Sometimes when his mother was called from the old man's side Just, little as he was, would interrupt his play to take her place. He would sit silent and motionless, watching to turn his grandfather's page at the proper moment, if he chanced to be reading, or

if he was in pain would very gently wipe from his brow the sweat of agony, as he had seen his mother do.

A portrait of Just, painted when he was four or five years of age, has been preserved and is very winsome. The little face is sweet and smiling. The eyes are dark and bright, and the forehead high. The cheeks, destined to be thinned in youth by fasts and penances, are round and very rosy.

In August, 1840, a third son was born to M. and Mme. de Bretenières, and received the name Christian. Just was no longer lonely in his father's big, well-ordered chateau. Throughout their childhood and youth the brothers were close companions, and so happy together that they did not feel the need of association with other boys of their own age, of which they were deprived by their father's conviction that it was best for them to be educated under his eye by private tutors. Whatever the ordinary drawbacks of this system they were offset in the case of Just and Christian by advantages so unusual that the carefully isolated boys grew to be men of broad culture. Sterling principles and fervent piety prepared one to become a saintly priest and the superior of a college, the other early to shed his blood in the cause of the Lord and Master for whom he had unhesitatingly sacrificed "all save the sweetness of treading where He first trod."

The family spent part of every winter at Dijon in the beautiful old home of the Baron de Bre-

tenières, their grandfather, whose learning and worth were so well known that the government of the Restoration had named him first chairman of the Court of Appeals. His life had been a checkered one. Obligated to emigrate during the Revolution, he went to Italy where he supported himself as best he could by giving lessons in painting. More of the children's time was spent with the Baron de Montcoy, father of Mme. de Bretenières, a courtly old gentleman, whom much suffering of body, mind and heart had chastened and made strong. To the boys he was a hero, and they listened with rapt attention to his stories of the dangers through which he had passed, and of brave deeds that he, himself, had witnessed and whose memory was enshrined within a heart too noble ever to forget the nobility of others. Doubtless his tales made heroic self-devotion seem beautiful and almost commonplace to the little boys listening open-eyed at his knee; doubtless, too, they formed part of the remote preparation for the sacrifices which were one day to tear Just from all that he loved and to lead him, step by step, to the Foreign Mission Seminary, to Korea, and to martyrdom.

Young at the time of the Revolution the aged Baron had seen its perils at close range and had drunk deep of its horrors. Forced into the army of the Republic that was charged with chastising recalcitrant Lyons, he had deserted to offer his services to the valiant city. The history of its defence is one long tale of heroism crowded with

such incidents as children love and never forget; for instance, at a certain point in the city the artillerymen lay huddled about one of the batteries, wounded or discouraged. All but one of their guns had been silenced when Marie Adrian, a girl thirteen years of age, dressed like a boy that she might do her work more easily, began to fire the remaining gun, indifferent to the bullets that fell on every side. She did not stop until her ammunition was exhausted. After the surrender of the city she was dragged before a tribunal set up by the conquerors. "How did you dare to fight against your own country?" she was asked. "On the contrary, I was defending it," she replied. She was sentenced to death, and went bravely to the scaffold.

When Lyons fell the Baron succeeded in making his escape. He wandered about the woods of Forez until he was arrested by two soldiers. Their prisoner seeming to be meek and quiet they took no special precautions to guard him, and suddenly he threw one of them from his horse, snatched his pistol, and shot the second. Free once more he resumed his wandering life, taking refuge, at last, in the hut of a poor laborer. Soon two soldiers came upon him there, took him captive, and dragged him back to Lyons where he was thrown into prison, there to await execution as a deserter and an enemy of the Republic. One day when the names of those to be guillotined were called the doorkeeper cried out, "Plantin de Montcoyl!" No one went forward

and he repeated the words. "The prisoner's name is Lantin," his associate said, and as that name was not on the list insisted that they had no right to take the Baron. That day Robespierre fell, and on the next all the prisoners were set free.

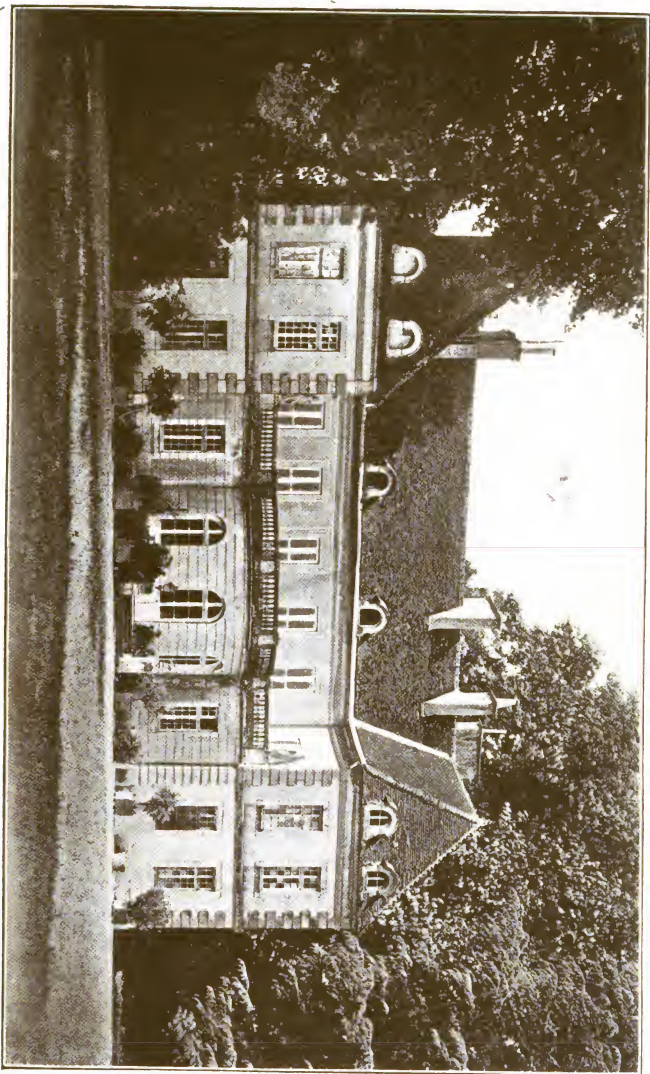
Nor was their grandfather the only hero whom the children revered with boyish whole-heartedness. The Abbé Pagnier, a friend of the Baron's, a virile old man of strong and simple piety, had also proved himself fearless in the days of the Terror. One morning he was taking Holy Viaticum to a poor man in a farm house. Reaching a river he saw two Revolutionary spies stationed at the end of the bridge. To save his life it was necessary to get the better of them—which he promptly did. Having carefully hidden the Blessed Sacrament, bare-handed he seized one, threw him into the river, and quickly sent his companion after him. Calmly taking the Sacred Host from Its hiding place he then crossed the bridge without waiting to see how his enemies made their way to land. Another old man, also a friend of the family, had been closely associated with the unfortunate Louis XVI. He had great affection for Just whom he always greeted with the words, "*Justus ut palma florebit.*"¹

Of Just's early childhood there is little to tell. He was pious, but so are many children. He was studious and docile and loving. Only one incident of his first years has been preserved, prob-

¹ The just shall flourish like a palm tree.

ably because it is the only one that marked him as in any way different from other children surrounded by every care and naturally devout. The spot on which it occurred is now marked by a wooden cross. One day when Just was six years of age and Christian four they were playing together under the watchful eye of a German governess. To amuse themselves they dug into the earth with little sticks. Suddenly Just said to his brother, "Be very quiet for a moment;" and bending low over the hole which he had made, he cried joyfully, "I see the Chinese! I see the Chinese! Let's dig deeper and we'll soon come to them!" Christian looked into the hole but could see nothing. Just stoutly insisted that he did, and digging excitedly described to his brother how the Chinese looked and what clothes they wore. Some, he said, were on horseback, some afoot. And he declared that when he put his ear close to the hole he could hear their voices. After a few minutes the children went back to their ordinary play and the incident was not mentioned between them or to their parents.

Years passed, and one day the two brothers, both in ecclesiastical dress, were seated under a tree in the forest of Meudon. There were tears in their eyes and their voices often trembled as they talked. Just had been ordained only a few days before and was waiting to be told what foreign land was to be the field of his apostolate, and perhaps—though he hardly dared to hope for such joy—perhaps of his martyrdom! At last



THE CHATEAU AT BRETENIERES WHERE JUST DISCOVERED HIS CALL TO THE MISSIONS
(See Page 6)

Christian's voice failed him, and Just said very tenderly, "Don't imagine that it does not cost me dear to go. It is hard, terribly hard, Christian, for me to leave all whom I love, but God's call is irresistible, and ever since the day—" He went on to recall the morning on which he had seen and heard the Chinese in his little hole. He had a vivid remembrance of the whole scene; Christian, too, he found, had cherished every detail of it.

Only once in all the intervening years had Just ever referred to the incident. He and one of his fellow students of the Foreign Mission Seminary had gone to see a poor child whom Just had been instrumental in placing in an orphanage. To make conversation he asked his protégé what he was going to do when he grew to be a man. The child declared so positively that he intended to be a missionary that the other seminarian was surprised. Just said, "I am not. My own vocation manifested itself earlier than this boy's." And he told his friend of the vision of his childhood.

It would be easy to see in the incident no more than a childish fancy had it not so deeply impressed both brothers, and so providentially influenced Just's whole life. Besides, Just, calm and thoughtful, even as a child, was not one to be carried away by his imagination.

CHAPTER II.

BOYHOOD.

During their childhood the boys occupied adjoining rooms, and every evening after their mother had embraced them and gone down-stairs to rejoin their father, Just preached a little sermon to which Christian listened attentively. "You see," Just said one night, "we ought to aim at perfection; but perfection isn't easy. It's like a high mountain whose summit is hard to reach, but if we try for a long time we can get to the top, and then God will reward us." Christian never forgot these words though he was only four years old when they were uttered and it was many a year before he understood them.

It was about this time that Just made his first confession, and afterwards made the following resolutions, remarkable for a little child, however pious and intelligent: "I will try to be good always and everywhere in spite of the temptations of the devil and bad example. Every morning I will ask God to give me grace to be good during the day, and when evening comes I will try to remember whether I have done my duty. I will often talk to my Guardian Angel and beg him to help me, and I will always remember that I am in the presence of my Creator. Every Sunday I

will read these resolutions, and if I forget them I hope that Father and Mother will remind me of them."

Naturally modest and retiring, Just kept himself in the background except when there was question of the services of the Church. He was eager to serve Mass, but the first time he tried was so overcome with shyness, and consequently made so many mistakes, that when all was over he burst into tears and only the kind curé could console him.

Even as a child he loved to pray. The boys said their morning and night prayers with their tutor, and for two or three years, on the pretext that the teacher was frail and needed all the rest that he could get, Just rose before anyone else, made the fire, put the school room in order, and then passed in prayer the time remaining before the others joined him. However tired and sleepy he might be, he never went to bed without saying his beads slowly and fervently. Each spring he and Christian built an altar in honor of our Blessed Mother in one of the rooms of their father's house and kept it covered with flowers throughout her month. Day after day they held short May devotions before it, at which little Just always officiated and Christian played the part of congregation. After a time, with the curé's permission, the boys did even better. They built their altar out-of-doors, and every evening they rang a bell to announce the beginning of devotions. Soon the old women, young girls, and children of

the neighborhood joined them, and Just sweetly, gravely, and reverently read a page from a devotional book: such, for two years were May devotions in the village of Bretenières. One of the old peasants used proudly to exclaim, "Master, Just is the makings of a saint!"

His piety was not the fruit of lively sensibility, or of an imagination inclined to mysticism. It was born of a calm, well-balanced mind, enlightened by faith as logical as strong, and proved its genuineness by kindness to all and tenderest love for those bound to him by ties of flesh and blood. He was devoted to his brother, his *little* brother, as he always felt Christian to be, and whom he treated accordingly. To forgive him everything, to find excuses for him under all circumstances, to efface himself in his favor, this was Just's policy in regard to Christian. There were seldom any contentions between them, but when one did arise Just nearly always yielded with perfect good humor. One day, after a very heavy fall of snow, the boys built a snow house twelve feet in height. They were sitting on the top of it, admiring their work and planning some sort of ornamentation, when a dispute arose as to just what it should be. Christian insisted that his idea should be followed, Just liked his own better, and in a sudden burst of anger Christian snatched a tool which his brother held in his hand. Not prepared for the jerk Just lost his balance and fell to the snow-covered ground below. For a moment he was stunned, but as soon as he could

rise laughed good-naturedly over the mishap, which he attributed to his awkwardness, and the two boys amicably resumed their discussion. To the end their brotherly love was deep and tender. The last letter that Just wrote before he left France forever was his farewell to Christian.

Towards the servants he was particularly gentle, never asking special service unless he was obliged to, and then always politely. Only once did his mother hear him give an order imperiously. Reproved and told to make some sort of reparation, Just instantly went in search of the man to whom he had been rude. Finding him in the midst of the other servants of the household he said bravely, "I beg your pardon for having spoken so brusquely."

In 1848, when Just was ten years of age, the great Père Lacordaire preached the Advent sermons at Dijon and during his stay there called upon M. and Mme. de Bretenières. Just chanced to be in the room at the time of the visit and his mother made him a sign to come forward and ask the famous preacher's blessing. Instead of giving it Père Lacordaire took the boy into his arms, saying, "This child is already blessed."

The love of work which became one of Just's marked characteristics manifested itself at an age when most boys must be driven to their tasks. Even his play usually took the form of some useful occupation. He was only six or seven years of age when he cultivated a little garden, with all the ardor of which he was capable; at eight he

began to collect specimens of minerals and in time learned to judge fossils with unusual accuracy. One by one, and almost unaided, he learned several trades and arts; he became carpenter, joiner, sculptor, doing each kind of work exceptionally well.

Everything about their father's household was made subservient to the boys' best interests. Their parents put aside all that might have interrupted their lessons or in any way interfered with them. The house became like a college, almost like a monastery. Study hours and classes succeeded each other in unvarying routine, and recreations were as systematically arranged. For a few years M. and Mme. de Bretenières kept the children's education almost entirely in their own hands, but in 1849 they engaged as tutor a French priest—Father Hilaire—who was witty, learned, and devout, but very frail. The delicacy of his health gave Just innumerable opportunities to exercise his thoughtful kindness. For many months he hurried to Father Hilaire's room early every morning to help him to dress, and in many other ways showed a sympathy and tenderness unusual in a boy of his years.

When, at length, the state of his health obliged Father Hilaire to give up all work M. de Bretenières chose the Abbé Gautrelet to replace him. At first sight the new preceptor was impressed by the gentleness and candor of the boys and the extreme simplicity with which they were dressed. It was in the garden that he met them. After a

few minutes they led him to the house, talking of a trip which the family had taken a short time before. When they reached the library Just spread a map on one of the tables and pointed out the way over which they had traveled, charmingly relating little incidents which had occurred during the trip. Suddenly interrupting himself, he said, "It's your turn now, Christian; I am tired." And his brother continued the story as interestingly as it had been begun.

The boys were delighted to have a young teacher, full of life and fun, and the Abbé Gautrelet was charmed by his new pupils. Just he described as having an attractive face, framed by light brown, waving hair, and he admitted that the extreme fineness of temperament betrayed by his voice, his manner, his features, had troubled him. "All through the first night that I spent in the house," he related, "I lay awake trying to foresee Just's future, but my dreams, bright as they were, were far surpassed by the glory destined to be his."

"From that day," the Abbé Gautrelet wrote, years later, "there began for me a joy which lasted for several years. I determined from the first to do all in my power to keep those dear boys, as I found them: gentle, and good, and very close to God." In notes which he wrote at the request of Just's first biographer the Abbé Gautrelet said that the boy was attractive and lovable, and so even-tempered that during the nine years which he spent with the family only two

or three times did Just become irritable. He habitually considered the comfort and convenience of others before his own; he played all games willingly, but more often from a desire to give pleasure than because he cared for them. For a time both boys found a certain game of cards very amusing and played it frequently. One day their game was postponed because a trifling incident interfered with it. Just complained, and cried a little, saying that there was no reason why they should not play as usual. As a punishment the boys were not allowed to play that game again.

Intellectually Just was richly endowed. He seemed to have a special aptitude for every branch to which he applied himself. He studied well, but as a child was subject to rather long periods of distraction. He would lose himself and dream—probably of the priesthood, the goal of all his desires—until his attention was called. He would blush then, and disarm reproof by admitting that he had forgotten himself and by promising to try to do better.

It would seem that a pupil so pious, docile, studious, amiable would have won the affection of a master who could find in him no fault except a too great shrinking from suffering. But, though appreciating his remarkable qualities of mind and heart the Abbé Gautrelet grew to feel a sort of antipathy for Just and did not hesitate to show it. He thought—mistakenly—that M. and Mme. de Bretenières favored Just above

Christian, and resolved to balance the preference by giving his to the younger brother. He feared that Just's rapid progress would discourage Christian, less gifted and of less even disposition, so to the boys themselves and to their parents he spoke only of Just's mistakes and of Christian's successes. His intention, originally good, if a little unwise, developed into a real prejudice against Just, who never complained and never resented it.

"Christian's affection for me," the Abbé Gautrelet wrote, "was very demonstrative, and I returned it. Just, as willing as his brother to be friendly, I repulsed so often that at last the child understood and held himself aloof. He said nothing, but in the course of time a trifling incident showed me that he keenly felt my coldness. One day I was walking up and down reading a book. Just came close to me and thinking he was Christian I put out my hand and pressed his affectionately. As quick as a flash he threw his arms around my neck, crying, 'Oh, thank you! Thank you! Do you love me a little, too?' The incident made a deep impression upon me, and from that hour I changed my manner towards him.

"I confess that during my first years with the family I did almost nothing to stimulate Just's progress, spiritual or mental, but he had so strong a sense of duty that he worked steadily despite my negligence and my rebuffs. It is true that I knew his rich nature and relied on his excellent dispositions, and acted as I did in the interests of

his brother. I feared the too rapid progress of the elder boy whose future gave me no uneasiness. For him I dreaded success, for Christian discouragement. This is my only excuse."

The boys made splendid progress under the Abbé Gautrelet's tuition, and the watchful care of their parents who took a deep interest in their studies. "I am certain that from the time they were mere children neither Just nor Christian was ever idle for a quarter of an hour," the Abbé Gautrelet testified. By way of recreation from their studies and other duties, the boys made collections of minerals, birds, and fossils. Every year excursions, taken during their vacations, gave them opportunities to enlarge these collections, and the winter evenings were spent in classifying their finds, labeling the fossils, and analyzing the minerals. Just became expert in stuffing birds. Christian told in later years how they had had but one gun between them. "Of course," he said, "Just left for me the pleasanter part in our hunting expeditions. He pretended not to see well enough to take accurate aim, so the gun was nearly always in my hands, and he carried our provisions and our booty. However, on the rare occasions that he did shoot he was very successful, so I knew that he had other motives than those he gave for leaving the better part to me."

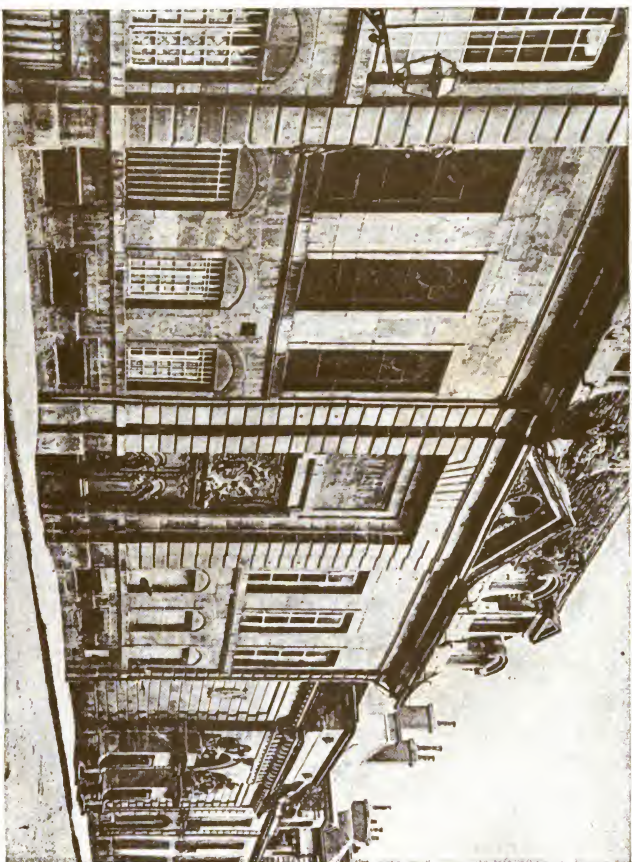
Thus did the boys grow up, most carefully guarded and guided, protected from idleness and all its dangers, and stimulated by good example. They responded admirably to their training, be-

coming strong of mind and body, tender of heart, pure of soul, the joy and comfort of their parents, and the edification of the parish. Their piety was practical, undemonstrative, deep. Of Just the Abbé Gautrelet said, "Unless I am greatly mistaken he never lost his baptismal innocence." And among notes made by his mother the following was found: "One of the great sorrows of Just's life was that he once told a lie. He was accused of a great fault which he had not committed. Seeing that his accuser was convinced of his guilt and determined that he should avow it, and in his purity not even understanding the nature of the fault, Just said that he had committed it. It cost him dear to refrain from speaking of the matter to me, as he was told to do. It was only on the eve of his ordination to the sub-deaconate that he talked to me about it. He was still inconsolable over having been untruthful."

In 1851 began a series of excursions which for nine years filled the boys' vacations, and made them familiar with every corner of Switzerland, Savoy, and parts of the surrounding provinces. These journeys were made afoot, with a sack strapped to each one's back and a geologist's hammer in his hand. Their father and sometimes even their mother took part in the excursions. Rain, heat, cold, fatigue, hunger, and thirst were often the portion of the travelers, and more than once they saw danger at close range. Recreation and instruction were not the

only ends M. de Bretenières had in view. He wished to strengthen the bodies and the characters of his sons by accustoming them to hardship. Just loved the wandering life of these vacations, not because of an intense interest in their collections or from a thirst for adventure: he considered it a novitiate for his future labors as a missionary. He made a point of bearing gaily fatigue, heat, and thirst. He never even showed that he was tired. No matter how great the heat he did not drink at the springs which the others hailed with delight. Whether the day's walk was through a hot valley or over the snow of some mountain-top he made no difference in his clothing, and was ingenious in managing to get for his share the greater part of their specimens and provisions. He never allowed his father or Christian to be burdened, but for hours would carry a very heavy load, smilingly, merrily; and even if it was late when they reached the end of the day's march he did not go to bed until he had sorted whatever specimens they had found. So deeply did he appear to be interested in these things that more than once his father said to Mme. de Bretenières, "You see Just no longer thinks of becoming a priest." But year after year when they reached home and the winter's work was about to begin Just would whisper to his mother, "Don't worry about my future. You know my intentions."

His first reason for the ardor with which he entered into the family excursions was, undoubt-



THE COLLEGE OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES AT DIJON, FRANCE
(Formerly the city residence of the family de Bretenières)

edly, a desire to accustom himself to hardships such as fall to the lot of every missionary. After his entrance into the seminary he said, when Christian recalled the fact that he had always refused to make himself comfortable by taking off his coat or vest, "I wished to see how a priest suffers who cannot remove his cassock however intense the heat. Was it not well to accustom myself in advance to the little discomforts of the state I longed to embrace?" He wished, too, to nourish in Christian a love for pleasures which would be a safeguard after he was gone. Shortly before he left home he admitted to a priest who was a close friend of the family that he had never had any interest in their collections except for his brother's sake.

In the autumn of 1857, when Just was nineteen years of age, by the advice of his director he spoke to his parents of his intention of becoming a priest. They made no objection, but believed that they did well to ask him to wait for two years and to say nothing of the matter to Christian. Just submitted. For two years more he continued to be his brother's constant companion and devoted friend. Their studies were continued together; their usual trips were taken, and others which secured for them glimpses of the world to which their social position gave them entrance.

When the appointed time had passed Just begged his parents' permission to leave home, arguing that he was twenty-one years old and

would not be ready for ordination at the permitted age if he waited longer, and reminding them of the crying need for priests. M. and Mme. de Bretenières gave their consent and it remained only for Just to decide what was his exact vocation. He longed for the most entire sacrifice possible and felt that perfection pointed to a union of religious life with work in a foreign land. The missions held first place in his heart. For years his favorite reading had been the history of the cruel persecutions of the Orient and the lives of martyrs and confessors in China, which had strengthened ever more and more his love for the foreign apostolate. The Dominican Order, with its high ideal of the religious life and the precious treasure it possessed in the missions confided to its care would, he believed, satisfy all his longings. Because he knew, loved, and revered many Dominican Fathers his director, as well as M. and Mme. Bretenières, feared that his devotion to the great Order had its roots in mere natural feeling, so they advised him to go to Paris and consult some one entirely disinterested. Just made some objections to the plan, but did as he was told, Christian all of this time knowing nothing of the momentous interviews which were being held between Just and their parents, nothing of the proud but lonely tears of the old people nor of Just's tremulous joy.

The superior general of the Sulpicians, whom he consulted in Paris, advised at least one year's

sojourn in the seminary of Issy, during which time Just could prayerfully consider his vocation to the Dominican Order. Just prepared to follow this advice, though in his own heart there was no doubt that he was called to the religious life.

On the first day of October Christian and he were together in what had been their school room. Christian outlined an elaborate course of study for the coming winter. Just said nothing. "Well, shall we begin it?" Christian asked. "For me all this is over," his brother replied, and he explained that he intended to enter the seminary. Christian was deeply moved, deeply grieved, and much surprised. Many things in regard to his brother which he had not understood before became clear to him at that moment. Just's sweetness, his spirit of mortification, his whole manner of life were explained. Not for an instant did he doubt the reality of his brother's vocation. He saw plainly evidence of God's call on the one side, and on the other of constant fidelity to grace. Instead of trying to hold the brother who was his best, almost his only friend, he did what he could to strengthen his resolution.

CHAPTER III.

THE SEMINARY AT ISSY.

On the nineteenth of November, 1859, Just entered the seminary at Issy. From the first joy overflowed his heart in his new surroundings. He was more completely at home than he had ever been before, reveled in the spirit of the place, and laughed at the little privations that fell to his lot. The discomforts of his cell, which had an unsatisfactory grate and was incredibly small, he found extremely amusing. "I should be miserable with a big room and an antechamber," he told his grandfather. His fellow students edified him, and of the professors he could not say enough in praise. To the Abbé Gautrelet he wrote, "Here a newcomer is received like an old friend. He finds himself in the midst of a hundred brothers who do all in their power to make him feel at home, and simply load him with kindness." And in a letter to one of his relatives, he said rapturously, "Picture to yourself our big household where the professors are fathers rather than masters, where we students kindly point out to one another our little faults and treat one another with a gentleness, charity, and affability which remind me of what one reads of the early ages of the Church

—picture all this, and you will have an idea of the atmosphere in which I am living.”

Class work was new to him and he found it delightful. “I had imagined,” he wrote, “that nothing could be graver than a professor of philosophy in his chair. I was greatly mistaken. Our classes are so attractive that even if it were not of rule to assist at them, we should do so voluntarily. Two or three of us recite, and if we say something ridiculous the rest laugh—but no one minds that. Discussion of the subject matter follows, then explanations, given with so much spirit and gaiety that the hour passes all too quickly.”

Richly endowed and very studious Just did remarkably well in his classes. To the work required he added the study of harmony, and he volunteered to give a German lesson each week to one of the professors. “Often,” as this professor afterwards related, “we began to talk of God, and Just would tell me of his desire for the Foreign Missions. It filled me with admiration to hear him speak of holy things. Many a time German was forgotten, and at the end of our hour we laughingly put off the lesson until the following week.”

Appointed to serve in the refectory, Just loved his humble work and was greatly amused over his difficulties. It was customary to feed the poor after dinner time, and he was overjoyed whenever his turn came, and eagerly replaced anyone who was prevented from doing duty on

his appointed day. It pleased as well as amused him, to hear the beggars call him *Father*.

Soon after he entered the seminary several of his fellow students received their cassocks, and envying their lot he wrote to his parents, "This is a day of days for some of my companions who have the joy of wearing their cassocks for the first time. How I envy them! Father Superior, who is very kind, so kind that not knowing him you have no idea how kind he is, says that I may ask your permission to receive mine on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. May I do so? What a day the Eighth will be for me if you consent! Do not fear that this would separate me from you. Quite the contrary! — I think of you constantly, and if there were no dear Lord and no Blessed Mother to replace you I should regret having left home. I find it very hard to fill dear Christian's place. I am always on the watch among the new brothers whom God has given me for those who are most like him; but no friend, however dear, can make me forget him. I shall be so happy when I see him again."

Just, inured to mortification, had expected to be required to practice it rigorously at Issy, and at first was scandalized to find the meals so plentiful and so appetizing. "I wished to fare like a Capuchin and I am indulging in sweetmeats!" he exclaimed. "I tell it in a whisper, for it is shameful, is it not, for a seminarian? But I repeat to you what I heard one of my new brothers say

the other day: 'It isn't my fault that I dine so well.' "

At his advancement in the spiritual life Just worked with intense earnestness, convinced that before his entrance into the seminary he had done nothing. This, indeed, was his life work. One who knew him well at Issy said, "Just told me that it was at this time he really learned to pray. God began to draw him very close to Himself by the prayer of simplicity. He prayed without distractions. His director, not quite understanding the way in which God was leading him and wishing to be certain that he was not deluded, told him to commit to writing some of his prayers. Having examined them he gave Just entire liberty to continue in the way he had begun."

Meanwhile Just was trying to learn God's will in his regard. Undoubtedly the union of the religious life with the foreign apostolate was his ideal, but the missions had first place in his heart and if he entered a religious order he could not be certain that he would ever be a missionary, for his work would be what his superior assigned to him. Little by little, after much prayer, much thought, much suffering of mind and heart, he came to believe that it was to the Foreign Mission Seminary in Paris that God was directing him. The way he trod before reaching his decision was long, rough, and difficult, and at the time his studies were unusually exacting because he had entered the classes two months after they

opened. The strain was too great and affected his health. He became subject to violent headaches, he slept poorly, and his appetite failed. Given permission to go home for a rest he availed himself of the privilege only when he was too miserable to do his work, and always returned as soon as he felt better. During the days spent with his family he and Christian resumed their long walks in search of specimens and worked among their collections.

Shortly after Pentecost Just received tonsure. He had fallen ill with an acute attack of rheumatism and to the day of the ordinations it was uncertain whether he would be able to go to the chapel. But when the hour came he had recovered sufficiently to move about without intense pain, and with angelic fervor he took his part in the long ceremony. Six weeks later the seminary closed for the summer vacation and he returned to his family, to carry out at home, as nearly as possible, the regulation which he had learned to lean upon and to love. Every morning he gave the hours from five until eight o'clock to prayer and the hearing of Mass, after which he and Christian hunted, walked, or worked among their treasures. Every day, too, he devoted some time to letter writing, believing that seminarians can more easily keep their fervor if they are closely united during vacation-time. As to choice of correspondents he did not consult his natural affection for some

of the students, but wrote to those whose names had been given him by his director.

A letter written to the Abbé Gautrelet during a trip which the family made relates the following incident, with the charming gaiety which characterized Just: "Without preamble I am going to copy for you a passage in the *Gazette*, a paper printed here three times a week, which you are not at all likely to see. 'The day before yesterday three men, suspected of the robbery in the church of Tresse-en-Comte, were arrested in the railway station of our city. Evidently they were attempting to escape to Switzerland. One of them, who said he is the father of the others, is of medium height, has gray hair, and a short gray beard. He looks to be fifty-five or sixty years of age, but is hale, erect, and full of energy. The second is tall and thin. He had probably stolen his clothes in an attempt to disguise himself, for his coat is much too small for him. The third,¹ who appears to be the youngest of the party, wears ecclesiastical dress as his disguise. They carried hammers, scissors, and other tools which told against them. Of course all three feigned to know nothing about the robbery, but five policemen took them in custody and conducted them through the crowded streets of the city to the police station and from there to the court house where they were closely questioned. The eldest of the party insisted on telegraphing to the mayor of Dijon whom he

¹ Just looked younger than Christian.

claims to know. They were all allowed to return to their hotel for the night under the surveillance of two policemen. The case was to be tried in Lure, and on the following day they were taken there by railroad, instead of on foot, as they offered to pay the fare. At Lure a number of policemen awaited them and the party could hardly make a way through the excited crowd which had gathered to see the criminals. Our correspondent in Lure has not yet sent his account of the sequel of the affair, so our readers must wait for the next issue to learn the end of the story.' "

Just broke off at this point to admit laughingly that there was no such paper as the *Gazette*, and that his father, Christian, and himself were the three men who had been arrested and dragged before two judges and from one town to another before they were able to prove their innocence. Afterwards, he told some one at the seminary that it had cut him to the quick to see his ecclesiastical dress share in humiliations which otherwise would have filled him with joy.

In October, 1860, Just returned to Issy for his second and last year there. He was appointed organist and infirmarian, so his hands were full indeed. As he wrote, in one of the few letters for which he found time, "I have just passed my half yearly examinations and we have very little sickness now, so I have a few free hours on my hands. This year we have been through a siege of fevers, grippe, sore throat,

and all known maladies. The strangest part of it all is the blind confidence my fellow students have in me simply because I am infirmarian. They are so good-natured that I gain no merit in waiting on them. I am afraid that at first I grieved a little over this, but I do so no longer. I see that God fits the burden to my back in giving me only good patients." By nature Just had no aptitude for nursing. Careless of physical comfort for himself, he was not ingenious in providing the little devices which help so much in the sick room. But charity is a good teacher, and his kindness, gentleness, and willingness were powerful helps.

On a certain day in May he spent some hours at home, and afterwards his father accompanied him to Issy. On their way Just told him that he wished to enter the Foreign Mission Seminary. Soon he spoke of the matter again to both his parents. The interview was heartrending. M. de Bretenières foresaw for his wife, himself, and Christian a future overshadowed by the pain of separation with no hope of a return; for Just, the hard life of a missionary, perhaps a cruel death; and he felt that he could not bear so great a trial. The mother was braver. She was able to thank God for having given her son so sublime a vocation, and heroically and promptly made her sacrifice.

Just explained his plans with no trace of emotion in his face or voice. When he was done and his parents made no reply he was discon-

certed, and fearful of giving way, said with energy: "Nothing will ever turn me from the path God is pointing out. I know a young student who, unable to obtain his parents' permission, secretly set sail for the East, after having spent a few months at the Foreign Mission Seminary." Later, Just bitterly regretted having spoken thus. He misjudged his father and mother in fearing that they would put obstacles in the way of his vocation, and they were cut to the quick by his lack of trust. So willing were they to accept God's will that in the evening of that same day M. de Bretenières went with his son to the seminary and introducing him to the superior begged that he might be admitted as an aspirant for the missions.

Just had two months more to spend at Issy, and with characteristic tranquillity continued his ordinary life there as if nothing of importance were pending for him. After his martyrdom Father Marechal, superior of the seminary and Just's director, wrote to M. and Mme. de Bretenières, "My recollections of the two years which Just spent with us are sweet with the perfume of his virtue, but they offer few incidents. His life was without display or ostentation, but beautiful and attractive. The following is the entry which I made in our register when he left us: 'Just de Bretenières for two years the edification of the seminary by his piety and amiability. His good qualities, the fruit of an excellent education received entirely at home, fit him for



CHRISTIAN DE BRETENIÈRES
AT THE SORBONNE



MADAME DE BRETENIÈRES, THE
MOTHER OF A MARTYR



CHRISTIAN DE BRETENIÈRES
AS A STUDENT AT ROME

great things.' Several times I thought of changing the last words, thinking them out of place in reference to the painful and hidden work of a missionary. Now I understand them."

Just would have liked to go to the Rue du Bac immediately on leaving Issy, thereby sparing himself and his loved ones the trial of sad last days at home. But his director counseled otherwise, and he went with his family to Bretenières to pass the last vacation he could ever have with them, as students of the Foreign Mission Seminary spend their holidays together at a country place called Meudon. During this difficult time Just was so calm, even gay, that M. de Bretenières was hurt, believing that his son had lost all love for home. Even his mother did not fully understand the soreness of the tender heart that deeply loved her, his father and brother, the old servants, the house, the grounds where he had played as a child, and the little church in which he had made his First Communion. During those days his affection clung to every old association with a tenderness such as many never feel. But though he could be calm he did not trust himself to talk of the coming separation, and whenever Christian mentioned it would turn the subject with a little joke or some remark about the collections at which they worked together to the last.

Poor Just! He was trying unselfishly, though perhaps not very wisely, to make the parting as easy as possible for his father and mother. To

know that he was breaking their hearts was almost more than he could bear. To one of his friends he wrote, "Help me by your prayers to take this step that I find so painful. I hope by it to learn my first lessons in detachment and abandonment of all things to God. My own desire is to return to Paris in ten or twelve days, but I feel that I ought to give more time than that to my poor parents. I would a thousand times rather have to combat opposition. As it is, I see my father pine in silence, and my mother grief stricken. Christian talks constantly of the things we used to do. God grant me grace to be firm! It is hard to make others suffer so much. But it is a joy to know that I am doing God's will. Do pray for my parents."

The end of the vacation came, and accompanied by M. and Mme. de Bretenières Just passed for the last time between the gates of the magnificent home of his childhood. For a moment his sorrow slipped beyond his control and with a deep sigh he exclaimed, "At last it is done!" On the nineteenth of September the family knelt side by side at Mass in the church of Fontaine-lès-Dijon, built on the site of the chateau in which St. Bernard was born, and that evening they started together for Paris. To the end Just's courage never failed. Long after his parents had fallen into silence and began furtively to wipe their eyes, Just talked calmly and

encouragingly to them, trying to share with their hearts the deep peace that reigned in his.¹

¹ Father Walsh, the Superior of Maryknoll, recalls in connection with the departure of Just from his home an incident mentioned by a saintly Marist priest, Father Barbier, who died in Boston a few years ago.

Father Barbier happened to be at the station when Just de Bretenières stepped out of his family carriage to take the train for Paris.

"That young fellow is a fool!" said the driver to a bystander as the young apostle passed out of hearing. "He is giving up a fine home and everything worth living for to go out to China and get killed. He is certainly a fool!"

And so he was—for Christ's sake, and of such is the kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FOREIGN MISSION SEMINARY.

Just's reception at Rue du Bac was most cordial, but to one accustomed to the atmosphere of an aristocratic home and the quiet refinement of Issy it seemed unceremonious to a degree that was a little embarrassing. The students gathered around him, laughingly saluted him as "Father de Bretenières," and clapped their hands on his shoulders or fairly hugged him. Disconcerted at first, Just was quick to see what treasures of virtue were concealed by the free and easy manner of his new friends. As he wrote to the Abbé Gautrelet, "I thought in the beginning that I was in the midst of a happy, easy-going crowd who take things as they come and trouble themselves but little about their inner lives. I was greatly mistaken. Soon I understood that a house from which men are sent forth to do battle with the devil in his own strongholds must be the object of God's special favors. If you come to see me this winter I shall tell you things that may astonish you and will surely convince you that the day of saints has not passed."

But having come to regard his fellow-students as saints Just felt himself unfit to be their asso-

ciate. As he expressed it, he dared not raise his eyes to them, and he really suffered from a sense of his unworthiness, until he learned to think not of what he was but of what he wished to be. By this road he went forward rapidly and courageously, accepting without flinching the conditions imposed by Our Lord on those who would follow Him closely: complete detachment and entire renouncement of their own will. Conscious of his inexperience in the spiritual life he took the simplest possible means of overcoming the difficulty and made a vow of obedience to his spiritual director. In spite of this safeguard he often went to extremes in his mortifications and acts of humility. He was young and lacked the balance which only time could give. Still, taken all in all, his life at the seminary, even in its earliest days, was admirable; it was earnest, generous, ardent.

The words of Almighty God to Abraham, "Leave thy country, thy family, and the house of thy father and go to the land which I shall show you," were often put before the students of the Foreign Mission Seminary to remind them that perfect detachment was necessary if they were to become exemplary missionaries. Just took them a little too literally. In some notes, written by Mme. de Bretenières, she says, "In the beginning of his stay at the Foreign Mission Seminary Just tried to break entirely with his family that he might belong solely to God. This was

very painful to us. Soon he, himself, understood that the thing was impossible."

He was in love with poverty. "All my life," he wrote, "I have intended some day to embrace a life of poverty not merely in my affections but effectually. Day by day my longing for poverty increases. It seems to me that everything I read, everything I see, everything I hear tells me, 'You are meant to be stripped of all things; keep only what is indispensable and deprive yourself of all else.' They tell me that affective poverty suffices, but in the bottom of my heart I feel that I must go farther, and all that I hear does not convince me. However, I am resolved to follow exactly and unquestioningly whatever Father Albrand tells me in regard to this, which is the only way I can be content. Probably I am talking foolishness of things which I do not understand at all." Certainly Just wore the livery of the Lady Poverty. His hat became a by-word at the seminary; one pair of stout, unsightly shoes served him for five years; sun and rain and long wear did their worst for his cassock. His rabat became so ragged that at last even he became convinced that it had had its day, and he secured another—out of the sweepings! He was obliged to wear glasses at his work and rejoiced to find old iron frames of archaic design.

His love of mortification was not less ardent. Finding his bed luxuriously comfortable he put his straw mattress on top of the upper, softer

one, and used his shoes for a pillow. Perhaps some day on the missions he would have no other: so he reasoned. It would be well, he thought, to accustom himself to rest without undressing and to sleep from time to time on the floor. Knowing that in the years to come he might often be soaked with rain and unable to change his clothes he tried to accustom himself not to do so in Paris. An imprudence of this kind cost him a serious illness. After an excursion during which on two successive days he had been drenched to the skin and had refused the coverings which his companions offered him for his bed, he had a severe attack of inflammation of the lungs.

To reassure his relatives, who were greatly alarmed when they learned of his illness, he wrote, "Experience has taught me a little prudence, so I am going to follow all the doctor's directions. I am drinking the water he prescribed, going to bed a little earlier than usual, and getting up a little later. I am trying to be good to my throat by keeping silence, or at least talking less than usual. But all this does not interfere with my ordinary work." Nevertheless, Christian, who stopped in Paris on his way home from a trip through Belgium, found Just in such miserable health that he wrote at once to his parents, who begged the family physician to take their reckless son under his care.

"After this illness," Mme. de Bretenières wrote sadly, "Just lost whatever remained to

him of the appearance of vigorous youth. His cheeks, until then round and full of color, became thin and pale; his body became thin and the bones in his hands very prominent. He looked more like an anchorite than a twenty-four year old seminarian. But his gaiety remained to testify to the joy and peace of his soul. The mortifications which he practiced certainly caused the change in his appearance."

Meanwhile Just's soul was ever reaching for higher and higher things. From St. John of the Cross, whom he deeply loved, he learned that the man of God should renounce spiritual as well as earthly joys. And promptly did he renounce them. On the days that the students were free to leave the seminary he had become accustomed to go to the chapel of some religious of Perpetual Adoration where amid a wealth of flowers and lights Our Blessed Lord was always to be seen under His Eucharistic veils. To Just the place was almost heaven. Perfectly happy he would kneel for hours in a corner of the chapel. "How easily one prays here!" he exclaimed more than once. He acquiesced readily when asked to say one of his first Masses there, but as the time approached excused himself. To his mother he confided the reason for his refusal. "I should have had too much happiness in saying Mass in that lovely place. A missionary should not be on the watch for spiritual joys."

In his desire for humility Just learned to seize every opportunity of lowering himself in the

eyes of others, and as far as possible stripped himself of all that in gesture, manner, or way of speaking would betray the refinement and elegance of his early surroundings. He endeavored to conceal his accomplishments, and to hide himself in the crowd. Often he stole noiselessly behind the priests as they prayed alone in the chapel and falling on his knees kissed the hem of their cassocks. The most menial tasks were his choice: he swept the corridors, he cleaned the lamps, he waited upon all. On the streets of Paris his shabbiness and pretended awkwardness sometimes called forth joking remarks that delighted him. It must be admitted that in his pursuit of humiliation Just more than once went to an extreme that bordered on eccentricity. After all he was little more than a boy: a defect more easily and more quickly remedied than any other.

At least one incident greatly troubled Just's peace of soul at this time. He expected to be called to Minor Orders at the close of his first year of theology, as was the custom at St. Sulpice, and when the time approached and the subject was not mentioned he suffered cruelly, believing that his superiors had found him unfit for the work for which his soul yearned with ever growing intensity. He thought it best to say nothing to his director, but to await in patience the awful sentence which, he became convinced, was hanging over him; but he spoke of the matter to Christian. "For two days," he

said, "I have been in anguish. Before speaking to my director I wish to give God this sacrifice, if he wishes it of me, and to place myself entirely in His hands. It seems impossible to me not to become a missionary. I have not been able to sleep these last nights, but when I was too much troubled I sang softly some hymn to the Blessed Virgin. I have put the matter in her hands, which gives me courage and makes me better disposed to accept whatever God wills."

It was only after he had reduced his suffering soul to indifference, or at least to perfect resignation, that he decided to speak to Father Albrand who reassured and consoled him. The rule of the Foreign Mission Seminary did not permit any student to receive Minor Orders as soon as Just was expecting it. He could not hope for ordination for several months.

Just suffered, also, from time to time, from the discouragement and disgust that may assail even the strongest souls. Two or three times at Issy community life had seemed to him an insupportable burden, and he had longed with all his heart to return to his own people. But the trial had passed quickly. At the Foreign Mission Seminary, also, he felt for a time an intense disgust for his work, his surroundings—everything. Thinking one day that he could bear it no longer, he went to Father Albrand and told him that he could not remain in the seminary, that he had no vocation and was obliged in conscience to return to the ordinary walks of life.

Father Albrand heard him to the end, then asked, smiling, "Is that all you wish to say to me?" "Yes, Father," Just replied. "Now go back to your room and think no more of the matter." Instantly the temptation lifted. Speaking of the matter afterwards Just would laugh heartily.

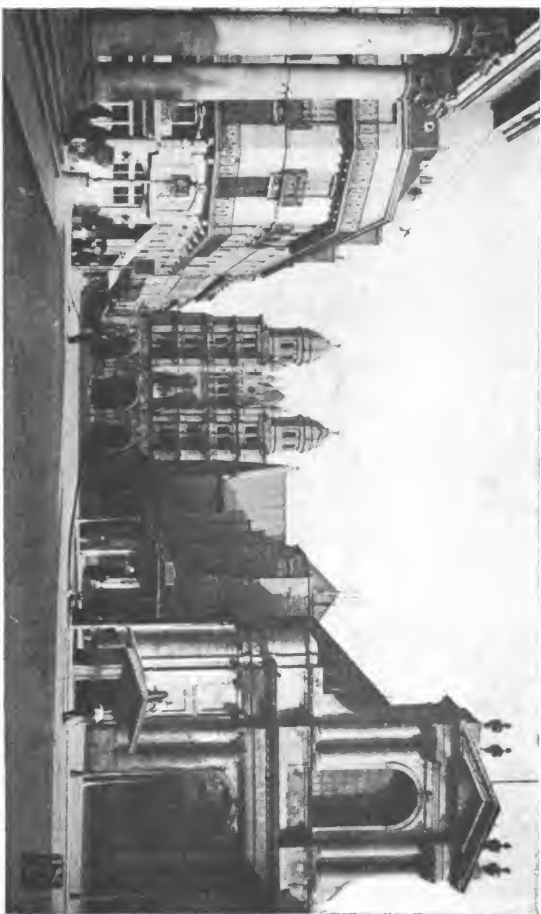
Ordinarily he was radiantly happy. His exuberant gaiety was proverbial. The merest trifle sent him into peals of laughter even in class and in the refectory where more than once he was reproved for what was deemed unseemly merriment. This light-heartedness was to serve him well during the long, painful journey to Korea and amid the hardships of the life that followed.

In the woods that surrounded Meudon Just found a retired spot greatly to his liking. There he often went to pray for the success of the missionaries already at work and to seek close union with God; and there his prayer was so blessed that it became a foretaste of heaven. On the pretext of accustoming himself to the hardships awaiting him he obtained permission occasionally to pass a night there. One morning a seminarian who had risen very early surprised him in his retreat. Just was kneeling with his forehead against the trunk of a young oak, completely wrapt in prayer and so motionless that rabbits were frolicing close beside him.

It was under this tree that Just and Christian had their last visit together, and after their son was gone M. and Mme. de Bretenières

loved to go there to weep and to pray. A cross cut in the bark now marks what to this day the seminarians call "Just's tree." Every Friday they gather around it to sing the Passion of Our Lord on the spot where one of His friends found courage to follow Him unto death.

While Just was at the Foreign Mission Seminary he began to hope that Christian, too, had a vocation for the priesthood. He did all in his power to encourage it and was overjoyed when at last his brother's hesitation and trouble of mind ripened into a resolution to enter the seminary at Issy. When Just's vacation came he went there with Christian, both of them being eager to make a retreat. They had parted to begin their days of prayer when Just, thinking of the temptations and trials certain to beset Christian during the long hours of solitude, hastily wrote him these lines: "Don't be surprised, dear Christian, to receive this little word from me. I am writing so soon after leaving you to say once more, do not be afraid if during this retreat and your first days as a seminarian the devil tries to conquer you by temptations to ennui and regret for the past. Don't let such feelings get the upper hand. Offer all the pain to God, and be joyous always, however trying the feelings that may assail you." Henceforth he and Christian were closer to each other than ever before. Their natural tie had been strengthened and elevated. Just could open his whole heart to his brother, and no longer hesitated to



THE CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL, DIJON
(The city where Just was born)

urge him to a sanctity satisfied only with perfection.

Nor did Just forget his parents. Realizing that God had required tremendous sacrifices of them in taking both their sons for His special service, he tried to help them to bear their loneliness by raising their hearts ever higher and higher until they would seek nothing but His love and His grace. Sometimes his exhortations were playful in tone, as when he wrote, "Perhaps, Father, you will call me preachy, but I repeat that the day will come when you will clap your hands over having made of your sons, not daring cavaliers, but—God willing—good fathers of families. For we aim, Christian and I, at being nothing less than fathers of families, after a fashion which does not require much house-keeping."

In his desire to prepare them for the complete separation to come he so arranged his time that they saw him but seldom and then only for a little while; and believing that they should know the dangers awaiting him he sometimes repeated to them stories of the missions that came to his ears in the seminary. "We have just learned," he wrote one day, "that a ship bearing six priests who left us last March took fire near Hong-kong and was entirely destroyed. They say that every one was saved, but we are not yet certain of this." In another letter he was able to tell more: "I am going to give you the details—some of them funny, some tragic—of the wreck

of our priests. On the evening of July twenty-fourth they were preparing for bed when the cry of fire sounded on all sides. They ran to the deck and found that in a few minutes the fire had made such headway that the captain—an Englishman—had lost all presence of mind. He and all on board knew that there were two hundred barrels of powder in the hold. Our priests gave one another absolution. In the confusion two of the life boats were badly damaged. Only two remained, and our six missionaries crowded into the same one, which carried twenty men and had room for only ten. It was impossible to take with them more than a little water, some bacon, some crackers, and some live ducks. After a few minutes the ship blew up making a wonderful display of fireworks. Remember, all this was in the middle of the night, a stormy night, with lightning, thunder, and high waves for setting.

“By morning the two boats had drifted apart but were headed in the same direction and about two hundred and fifty leagues from shore. For six days, during which the heat increased hour by hour, all hands rowed, the missionaries like the others, on rations of half a glass of water, a little bacon or duck, and a few crackers each day. After the sixth day all except the missionaries lost hope and would row no more. The boat was pursued by pirates and escaped only because richer prey came in sight. At last the party reached Macao, worn out with fatigue and hun-

ger, especially the priests who during the last two days had been obliged to do all the work. It seems that their landing was really funny: twenty living skeletons, but half clothed, whom the people flocked to see, curious to learn who they were and from what strange country they had come.

"The governor of Macao received the missionaries kindly, provided them with clothes and lodging, and two days later sent them to Hong-kong where the procurator of the mission received them with open arms. Not one of the band was ill, so all prepared to go at once to the various posts assigned them. Everything they had brought from Europe had been lost, but they were delighted to find themselves as poor as the Divine Master who had not a stone on which to rest His head.

"So you see, dear Father and Mother, that the Blessed Virgin never abandons missionaries. You may feel very safe about me who longs to be one, since you have placed me in her hands. Don't be afraid; nothing can happen to me except by God's permission."

Nor was this the only letter in which Just gave his parents a glimpse of the dangers which might fall to his lot. Later he wrote, "The mandarin who put Father Néel to death has been promoted. It looks as if God wishes to chastise the province in which our brother was martyred for it is in the clutches of a famine so terrible that the people are killing and eating little chil-

dren and those too weak to defend themselves, and a typhoon made horrible havoc in Canton. From beneath the debris they had recovered fifteen thousand bodies when our letters were written, and it was estimated that its toll was at least forty thousand victims in that one city! But not a Christian perished. In Cochinchina, affairs are going badly for the missions, and again priests are being hunted. Thibet, too, is mistreating them. In short God still has good things in store for those whom He calls to the foreign apostolate.

"Yesterday we had a letter from Tongking, the first for more than a year. Two of our missionaries had been arrested and put through three inquiries during which they not only received strokes of the bastinado but were tortured in other ways. Thirty times red hot pincers were applied to their bodies; fifteen times cold ones which they say cause more intense pain. We think that by this time they must be in heaven. Since 1858 Tongking has martyred fifty native priests, one of whom during his trial was tortured so cruelly on a kind of rack that his arms were almost torn from his sides, and another received seventeen strokes of the executioner's axe before his head was severed from his body. Bishop Jeanet narrowly escaped arrest. He was hidden not more than two feet from a place which was searched. All this news, so sad in one sense, is consoling in another. It shows

how deeply our holy Faith is rooted in these countries."

By his fellow students Just was revered as a saint. "When I wished to excite my devotion during the recitation of office I used to look at Just de Bretenières," one said; and another, "Each verse of the psalms seemed a prayer of love on his lips;" and a third told in later years, "There was not one among us who did not look upon him as a saint. As for me, when I heard that nine missionaries had been martyred, without knowing their names I said, 'It is impossible that Father de Bretenières was not of the number.'"

Just's relations with his companions were very intimate. Instinctively they went to him with their troubles and perplexities, and he was able to cheer and to encourage them. The following letter, written to Mme. de Bretenières shortly after her son's martyrdom, gives an idea of the extent of his influence over many: "It is to Just, after God, that I owe the happiness of having persevered in my vocation. My first day in the seminary passed pleasantly in meeting my new superiors and companions, but the following morning my heart was almost broken at the thought of having left my relatives and friends and above all my mother who had been paralyzed for six years. Finding myself alone I went to the woods where your son soon joined me. He questioned me kindly, and listened to all I had to say; then by tender, encouraging words brought peace to my soul. Later

my trouble returned and with it temptations that gave me no rest, until weary and disgusted, I thought more than once of leaving the seminary. I spoke to Father B— and it was he who arranged that I should be placed in close relations with your son. After that when the thought of home, family, and friends, or the temptations of the devil threatened to get the upper hand I went to his room. Whatever the hour and however busy he might be, Just was always ready to receive me, always cheerful, gentle, kind, and helpful. One day, for instance, he made me sit beside him on his bed, and said, 'You poor little fool, do you really want to go away? Would you leave the services of so good a God?' And he spoke so feelingly of the joy of working for our loving Master, of the Missions, and of heaven that I was strengthened and encouraged. Nor did Just forget me after he left us. He not only prayed for me, but letters from him came from the Orient to Anjou where I had been obliged to go to recover from an illness. I treasure two in which it makes me happy to see myself called, 'Dear little Louis,' and 'My very dear little Louis.' One was written in Manchuria, the other in Korea. He had heard of my ill-health and after some words of encouragement and sympathy and the promise of his prayers, he said, 'And pray much for the poor sinner who is writing to you, whose heart is very cold, and who does so little to make Our Lord forget all his ingratitude.' A few words

in the second letter give a glimpse of his love of mortification: 'Be very careful of yourself. Good health is necessary to a missionary. Mortifications come from every side without giving one the trouble to look for them. So, you see, life on the missions is very beautiful. Good-bye; write to me every year, and may Our Lord live in our hearts!' "

Near the country house at Meudon there are quarries from which quantities of stone are sent to Paris and its suburbs. The men who worked them in Just's time were irreligious, not through malice but through ignorance, and the directors of the seminary, yearning over their poor souls, permitted some of the students to work among them on holidays and during their summer vacations. Just soon became a leader in this apostolate and loved it intensely. He deemed his part in it the greatest grace that God had ever given him, apart, of course, from his vocation. He and his associates would make friends with the workmen by showing an interest in their work, offering to help with it, and talking affably to them. Stiff and unfriendly at first, the men's confidence was quickly won. One and all they liked Just. It did not take them long to discover that the tall seminarian with the distinguished air was easy to talk to, often had sweetmeats for their children hidden in his pockets, and was interested in all their affairs—in their hardships, their ailments, above all in their families. Many times Just went to the quarries burdened with

bundles of clothing for the children of some unfortunate laborer, and more than once when a workman died he found a home for his orphaned little ones. One or two incidents which proved to the men that he was afraid of nothing raised him immeasurably in their regard. Their affection and respect won, it was easy for Just to speak to them of God and His Mother, of the Church and the Sacraments, and he did untold good among them.

In a letter to his parents he explained his manner of approaching the men and his attitude toward them: "First of all I persuade myself—and it is easily done—that those poor fellows are better than I. They are men like ourselves, children of God like ourselves, and we should speak and act as if they were our equals in every way. I am trying to win souls dwelling in bodies broken by hard work, and weary, weary; and I throw aside my hat, roll up my sleeves, slip off my cassock, and seizing a pick-axe or a crow-bar make an effort to help. Sometimes I even suggest better ways of doing the work. When I have convinced one of the poor fellows that, in spite of my cassock, I am a man like himself, little by little I am able to speak to him of God, of the Sacraments, and of his own soul. If I were at Bretenières I should do the same for the working men there, always beginning with the conviction that I am no better than those whom I long to help. Perhaps, in God's sight, they are better than I. I should talk to them frankly and

very simply, without being afraid of letting them see the interest such splendid fellows arouse in me and the tender charity I feel toward them."

One winter night it was past ten o'clock before Just and his companion returned from the quarries to the seminary. While talking to the quarrymen they had missed from their number an old man, always faithful to his work, and on inquiring had been told that he was ill and had crept away to lie down within one of the caves in the rocks. Just and his companion feared that the exposure would cause the old man's death, and they undertook to find him. The approaching darkness and the immensity of the quarries made their task difficult. They had searched for a long time when, on reaching an abandoned quarry, some one called threateningly to them. It was the old man whom they were seeking. Believing that they were robbers he was trying to frighten them away. Just and his fellow student had taken him on their shoulders to a nearby hospital, only to be told that there was not a vacant bed in the house. From door to door they had then carried the sufferer, begging shelter for him, and at last had found an innkeeper who was willing to give their protégé a room for ten cents: all the money they had.

Just sacrificed everything—time, rest, recreation—to his work among the quarrymen. Sometimes even his brother suffered through his zeal for it. "I well remember," Christian told long afterward, "that shortly after the beginning of

my first year at the seminary I obtained permission to pass part of one of our holidays at Meudon. I had been with Just only a few minutes when he said that he was obliged to go away for some hours, but would introduce me to several other students whom, he assured me, I should find both agreeable and edifying. It is true that his friends were admirably zealous and devoted; nevertheless, I should have preferred my dear Just. It was nearly evening and time for me to go back to Issy before he returned. He had had work to do at the quarries: so did he understand charity! During that year, although he passed the door of our seminary on every holiday, he came to see me only four or five times, and when I complained of the rarity of his visits said, 'My writing to you and seeing you are two points upon which your ideas will change. We have found Jesus; what more do we desire?' "

But the quarrymen were not Just's only protégés. He was kind to the old men under the care of the Little Sisters of the Poor, visiting them frequently, instructing them, waiting on them at table. The men became very much attached to him and it was a sorrow to them when he said good-bye for the last time. Indeed, to be poor was to have the key of Just's heart. His parents were often reminded of this—perhaps more often than they relished. His letters to them are full of appeals for his protégés, each one more deserving and more destitute than the

last. "Dear Mother," he wrote one day, "do not be surprised so soon to receive another letter from me. I have something important on my mind to-day. I am going to give you a chance to place ten dollars at interest in the bank of our Heavenly Father. I would attend to the matter without troubling you, but I lack one thing: the ten dollars. Perhaps you will supply them. And it might be well to give four dollars more, that my poor people may have something to spend for pleasure, as well as for necessities. I trust you to plead this cause well with Father. Many, many thanks! Always count on the boundless love of your son, Just."

On another occasion he wrote to tell his parents that four years before one of his fellow students had burdened himself with the tuition fees of a promising boy at St. Sulpice. He had been a little rash, perhaps, having neither means, nor relatives to whom he could appeal. Just ended his explanation by saying, "Scold me if you like—but give!" Again he begged, not money, but a good, serviceable dress for a countrywoman of medium height, and two blouses for her ten and twelve year old sons. "Don't be afraid to supply the things, Mother; they are really needed," he said. And his mother sent the clothing, as she sent whatever he asked, never complaining of the generosity of her peniless son.

At Christmas-time, in 1862, Just received Minor Orders. Day by day his fervor was

deepening and his character maturing. He was no longer timid and uncertain of his way. He saw it clearly and walked in it steadfastly. Letters written at this time to a friend, already a missionary in Siam, give glimpses of his beautiful soul. In one of them he says ecstatically, "Each time that you speak to me of loving Jesus my heart is deeply moved and my desire to love Him grows stronger. But how fruitless my desires are! I see that there is one thing which I must ask for you and for myself: love. In a little more than a year I shall be a priest. It seems impossible that God will raise me so high, I who am so contemptible! I am appalled at the thought, and tremble before the responsibilities I shall assume." A year earlier it had been the thought of separation from those whom he loved that pained him. Now, he scarcely heeds this, so overwhelmed is he at the nearness of the priesthood of which he feels himself to be utterly unworthy. Shortly before his ordination, which was to be followed almost immediately by departure for the mission to which he was assigned, Father d'Hulst asked Just, "Of which do you think most, ordination or leaving home?" "What a foolish question!" Just laughingly replied. "I think only of the priesthood. To think that I—I shall say Mass!"

In the spring of 1863 he was ordained sub-deacon, and joy overflowed his soul. He had obtained permission to pass the preceding night in the chapel: a never-to-be-forgotten night.

From that hour until he was raised to the priesthood he tried to live in entire recollection, writing few letters, talking little, and passing hour after hour before the Blessed Sacrament. "I am alone, all alone with Jesus in my little cell. I see no one. I am very happy," he wrote to a friend, in one of the rare letters of those days.

A trial was reserved to him before he was to taste the joys of the priesthood. His old parents, who had so bravely given both their sons to God's special service, lost courage as the day of Just's departure drew near. They suffered intense agony; they felt that they *could* not see him go. They believed that he had mistaken his vocation, and foresaw a thousand dangers even for his soul. They pleaded with him and wept over him, almost breaking his loving heart.

The last time that he saw Christian before his ordination they went together to Just's favorite retreat in the woods at Meudon. "I could never give an idea of his conversation that day," Christian told years afterward. "It was full of perfect peace, and at the same time of a force and energy that I shall never forget. Just's soul was open before me. He did not know how to express his happiness. It was the last intimate talk I ever had with my brother. After he had given me excellent advice about my own ministry we knelt beside the tree and prayed together for the missions, particularly the one to which his superiors would assign him."

CHAPTER V.

ORDINATION AND LAST GOOD-BYES.

On the twenty-first of May, 1864, Just was ordained priest by Bishop Thomines-Desmazures, vicar-apostolic of Thibet. After the ceremony M. and Mme. de Bretenières slipped away, sacrificing their desire to kiss the loved hands freshly hallowed by the holy oils, that nothing might distract their son in the ineffable joy of his thanksgiving. Just's first Mass was said in a private chapel of the seminary. Christain and the Abbé Gautrelet served, and Father Campian, who for years had been pastor at Bretenières, assisted him at the altar. His parents and a few intimate friends were present. When all was over Christian interrupted Just's ecstatic thanksgiving by touching him gently on the shoulder and reminding him that their relatives and friends were awaiting his blessing. He arose instantly and going to the altar-rail blessed first his father and his mother, then all who were present—and at once returned to his unfinished prayers. "I have just heard Mass in heaven!" some one exclaimed as he left the chapel.

Before that day Just had hardly dared to ask of God the grace he desired above all others. "I am not the stuff of which martyrs are made,"



AT THE PARIS FOREIGN MISSION SEMINARY
128 Rue du Bac

1. Just's Favorite Walk
2. Preparing for the Corpus Christi Procession
3. A Bell from the East, used at the Ceremony of Departure

he had often said, "only innocent victims are worthy to follow in the footsteps of the Lamb." But the hope born in his heart when he was but a boy would not die. Two years before his ordination, in a letter which told of the death of a missionary, killed out of hatred for the Faith, he had exclaimed exultingly, "So martyrdom is still possible!" A priest, his timidity vanished. He no longer feared to hope that he might shed his blood for Christ. To die a martyr became, not only the goal of his desires, but a constant plea in his prayers, a hope so sweet that it filled his soul with joy too deep for words.

When, after the Consecration of his first Mass, he said the words, "And to us sinners, also, Thy servants, who trust in the multitude of Thy mercies, vouchsafe to grant some part and fellowship with Thy holy Apostles and Martyrs, . . . not weighing our merits but pardoning our offenses," the familiar words impressed him as they had never done before. He found in them a meaning inexpressibly dear to his heart. Writing to Father Dubernard, a missionary in Thibet, he said, "Beg of God the grace of martyrdom for me. It is His will that we should implore this great gift. Do we not ask it daily after the Memento for the Dead?"

While awaiting instructions as to his destination Just was absorbed by the joys of his priestly life. He lived very much alone, prolonging his thanksgiving after Mass far into the day and ending it only to begin to prepare for the next

day's Paradise. Sometimes his old father served him, with a pride no words can tell.

On the thirteenth of June, at the close of a little talk, his superior said to him, laughingly, "By the way, shall I tell you where you are to go? What mission do you prefer?" "I do not prefer any," Just replied. "If I send you to Thibet will you be satisfied?" Father Albrand asked. "Perfectly," was Just's answer. "You are to go to Tongking!" "That will do just as well," Just replied laughingly. "No, you are to go to Cochinchina," Father Albrand said next. "Just as you say," Just agreed. "You really do not care?" "Not at all, Father." Then, in a changed tone, Father Albrand said, "Let us talk seriously." Instantly Just threw himself on his knees to receive his destination prayerfully, as from the hand of God Himself. "Oh, if you are in earnest, that is another matter!" he exclaimed. "You are to go to Korea," Father Albrand told him. "If you had bade me choose I should have said Korea," Just answered calmly; and without another word he slipped away.

To the Abbé Gautrelet he wrote, "One little word to tell you where I am to go, for you, as well as Father and Mother, have a right to know at once. My dear new country is to be Korea. Our Lord is giving me the best He has. Just now it is our most beautiful mission, the one in which it is easiest to spend oneself to the last breath in the service of the Master. Hurrah for Korea, land of martyrs! It is true that at the

moment there is not open persecution, but sweat is replacing blood. There is a tremendous amount of work to be done. We shall probably leave here on the fifteenth of next month. The date of our arrival is less certain. It can vary as much as five months, so many mishaps are possible, and so many risks will have to be run.¹ But the prospect does not frighten me. Provided we are where God wishes nothing else matters much. Pray often for your Korean who will try to repay you by mementos in his Masses.

“Good-bye, dear old teacher! In Korea, as in France, I shall always love you and never forget our eight years together at Dijon and Bretenières.

“God be with you!

“JUST.”

¹ Determined to preserve the integrity of their territory, which both China and Japan coveted, the rulers of Korea had forbidden any stranger to enter the country under pain of death, and the same penalty was paid by any of their subjects who tried to leave it. The frontiers were closely guarded by a series of military posts, in the more important of which there lived, as inspectors and custom-house officers, police agents chosen for their cleverness and long experience. Fierce dogs helped them to keep watch night and day, so it was almost impossible for any one to cross the frontier unseen.

By land there were but two roads, one from Tartary, the other from China. On another side the country was protected by mountainous deserts and impenetrable forests. The only way to enter from this direction was to steal between two forts under cover of darkness, and by scaling the snow-covered mountains reach the interior. It was thus that the first missionaries penetrated the country, but in times of persecution all the ruses of the Christians had been discovered, and were known, not only to the mandarins, but to custom-house officers, to shepherds, and to farmers—in short, to all the native pagans. Entrance by land was henceforth impossible. Just and his companions were to attempt to find some quiet spot on the coast where they might disembark unobserved: a project beset with difficulties and dangers.

As soon as he knew his destination Just read everything he could find about Korea,¹ its history and its people. Fathers Beaulieu, Dorie, and Huin were named as his companions and the four exulted together over their happiness, hoping for the gifts which God held in store for them: four bloody deaths, four martyrs' crowns. They were together constantly, talking in an earnest way or praying side by side in the chapel. Before Father Dorie was told definitely as to his new country he ran through the corridors of the seminary, rapping on each door and announcing to his friends that he was to go soon. "But where?" one asked. "I don't know yet, but I am to be with Just. That's enough for me," he replied.

Poor M. and Mme. de Bretenières were heart-broken when they learned that their son was to go so far and to so perilous a mission. Just tried to soften their grief by being with them as much as possible. In a hundred little ways he distracted and amused them, and did his best to interest them in all the preparations for the long voyage. He begged his mother to treat his companions like children of her own, and to provide them as well as him with whatever was needed: which was little enough, for all were determined to accept as few things as possible and only what might belong to all in common. One day, however, Mme. de Bretenières was delighted because she had persuaded Just to accept a relic of the

¹ See Appendix.

true Cross as a parting gift from her. He had the precious relic put into a new reliquary and seemed to be very happy over the possession of his treasure. When Mme. de Bretenières told Christian of the matter he laughed a little. "If I know Just, you will have your relic back before long. You have tempted him; that is all." Half an hour later Mme. de Bretenières went to the Foreign Mission Seminary to see Just. He came hurriedly to the parlor, with the reliquary in his hand. "Take back your relic, Mother," he said; "I want to have nothing of my own. Do give it to Christian."

Just agreed to meet his brother on a certain day at the church of Our Lady of Victory. After Mass they renewed the consecration of their lives to our Blessed Mother, and once more M. and Mme. de Bretenières heroically offered their children to God. The remainder of that day Just and Christian spent with their parents. It was the last time that the family was ever united on earth. In an effort—a mistaken effort, perhaps—to make the hours pass as easily as possible Just showed no sign of sadness and seemed not to see the grief of his parents. He talked of indifferent matters, and was perfectly calm, even merry. M. de Bretenières, misunderstanding his son, was deeply hurt and bitterly reproached him. Afterward, when he had the key to Just's stratagem, he could not forgive himself.

In some notes which he wrote about Just, he said, "The three years of my son's stay at the

seminary were almost over. During all that time he had seldom come to see us. He had tried to prepare us for complete separation from him. His own sacrifice was made; he wished us to share it. From the beginning of his life at Rue du Bac he made an effort to lessen the number of our visits to him. He came slowly and reluctantly when called to the parlor. Often his mother saw him for a few minutes only, and once she came home in tears, not having seen him at all. I spoke severely to Just, reminding him of the fourth commandment. He heard me with the deference and sweetness and calmness habitual to him, which, alas! we were more than once tempted to attribute to a lack of feeling. I know now that I tortured our dear child. Later we learned from letters written at this time to his intimate friends that his heart was bleeding with sympathy for 'the grief of his poor father.' Those letters, with all their proofs of the tenderness of his filial love—which I never really doubted—will give me cause for tears to the day of my death.

"We went to Paris in July. Just was to have a free day. He arranged to devote a little of it to some work of charity and to give us the remainder. All day he was perfectly self-possessed. Evening came at last. Sitting beside his brother on the balcony of our apartment, which commanded a view of a great part of the city, he watched the sunset, knowing that it marked the close of the last day we should spend together

in this world. And as he watched it he laughed, and chatted gaily, and played little tricks on Christian. No doubt he saw our frowns—and he was but trying to make things easier for us! The moment came for him to leave, that moment which we had dreaded ever since the sad evening when he spoke to us for the first time of his desire to enter the Foreign Mission Seminary. Never since that evening had I seen him leave our apartment without thinking sadly, ‘The day is coming when I shall see him go for the last time.’ That day had come. I listened to the sound of his step on the stairs. I followed him with my eyes as far as I could, when he passed down the street. It was the last time.”

Not having an opportunity to see the Abbé Gautrelet before leaving France, Just wrote him a farewell letter, very simple, very brave, very touching: “A last good-bye before leaving home. It is for good this time that I say adieu. Adieu for this miserable life. We shall meet again in heaven.—Before going so far I wish to beg your pardon for all the annoyance and weariness I ever caused you, and I beg you to give me your blessing. It will bring me happiness during my journey, and later in my mission.

“On the fifteenth of this month we shall leave this dear seminary. Here I have passed the sweetest years of solitude I shall ever know, but whatever may be my future difficulties they will but pave the way for an eternity of joy. I am sending you a photograph of Christian and my-

self. Whenever you see it pray for us, and be assured that every time I say Mass you will be remembered at the Memento.

"Once more good-bye, my dear old teacher. I embrace you with all my heart.

"JUST."

The day of departure dawned. As M. de Bretenières wrote, "We had been invited to assist at Just's last Mass in the chapel of the Foreign Mission Seminary. His mother and I received Holy Communion from our child's hand, and this Divine Food alone gave us strength to bear the last good-byes. I was overwhelmed with grief. Still, in offering my son to God, I always tried to ease my sorrow a little by the thought that perhaps some day Providence would send him back to close our eyes.

"After Mass we went to the parlor where Just soon joined us. He was perfectly calm and made an effort to entertain us, as if we were soon to meet again. Our conversation was not long. We stood all the time like travelers who meet on their way and are soon to separate. We mastered our emotion, but a word, the merest trifle, would have opened the flood-gates of our tears. We knelt, and for the last time Just blessed us; then, after pressing him to my heart, I hurried out to call a carriage, for Christian was not well. When I returned Just was gone.

"Thanks be to God our parting was as the partings of Christians should be: without weakness and without tears!"

To these notes of her husband's Mme. de Bretenières added, "A sad, sad day which I shall never forget. That on which I learned my child's martyrdom was less painful to me, for then I knew that he was happy and would be for all eternity."

A friend of the family thus described the Ceremony of Departure: "On the fifteenth of July, 1864, I went to the Foreign Mission Seminary to see Father de Bretenières who had been assigned to the mission of Korea. I went to his cell and found the bed dismantled, the mattress rolled in a corner, and his trunk in the middle of the floor, strapped for the long voyage. Father de Bretenières wore a cassock which, though in good condition, was not new, and his rabat was worn. He was pale, and seemed to be deeply moved. I tried to tell him what I felt in seeing him go. He clasped my hand affectionately, begging me to pray for him and saying that he was happy over obtaining what he had asked of God. I replied, 'What weight will the prayers of a sinner like me have besides yours? You are sacrificing birth, talent, fortune, and home, that you may spread Christ's kingdom.' He replied, 'Pray for me; pray that I may obtain what I desire.'

"A bell rang summoning us to the little oratory built in a corner of the garden. The missionaries chanted the Litany of the Blessed Virgin. At the invocation 'Queen of Martyrs' they fell on their knees, and a great wave of emotion

swept over all of us who were present. Every heart was beating in sympathy with theirs. The Hymn of Departure, composed by Gounod, was sung next. I could see Father de Bretenières; his face was flushed, and his eyes shone. I heard his voice ring out strong and true."

Ten newly-ordained priests were leaving that day. They went from the oratory to the church and ranged themselves on the altar-steps, with their faces turned towards their friends, while the choir chanted the verse: "*Quam speciosi pedes evangelizantium pacem, evangelizantium bonam!*" M. and Mme. de Bretenières were kneeling in a dark corner of the tribune; Christian was in the sanctuary. He wrote, describing the scene, "They were truly beautiful, those young men who were leaving all things to set forth for the conquest of souls; and if my love did not blind me Just was most beautiful of all. He seemed to belong to heaven rather than to earth. In my turn I kissed his feet. He took me in his arms saying, 'Courage, courage! Never forget what I say to you: May Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament be praised forever!'"

The ceremony over, the visitors left the church. Just was surrounded by a number of priests and students. Reaching over their heads he held out his hand to his brother. "Until we meet in heaven! It is over here," he said.

Meanwhile M. and Mme. de Bretenières stood, hesitating, on the door-step of the seminary. A carriage was awaiting the travelers. Would they

wait for a last look, a last word? The father thought that it would be better to go. "We went home in silence, absorbed in our own thoughts. It was about six o'clock in the evening," the poor mother wrote afterwards:

As the party got into the carriage a beggar pushed his way through the crowd that surrounded them and Just gave him five pennies—all the money he had—and laughingly exulted over being "really poor at last."

So ended Just's days of probation. From the solitude and protection of the seminary he had set forth at last on the difficult way that was to lead to a cruel martyrdom. A beautiful letter, written to M. de Bretenières by his son's intimate friend, Father d'Hulst, gives a resumé of the years which had closed. "I saw Just for the first time on the day of his entrance at Issy," Father d'Hulst began. "His gentle, attractive manner impressed me at once. From the first I observed the confidence, I might even say deference, which he showed towards those younger than himself, and I soon understood that it sprang from a degree of humility that astonished and deeply edified me. After a youth so good and pious that it was a fitting preparation even for the dignity of the priesthood he was convinced of his inferiority in every virtue, and looked up to students whom he far surpassed. He quickly attracted the attention of the directors of the seminary and of the students, by his tender piety, fidelity to small duties, great contempt of self,

and unbounded charity. Just was persuaded that up to that time he had done nothing for God, and the farther he advanced the stronger grew this conviction.

"His character then lacked the firmness and courage which it acquired in time, but almost timid though he seemed, for six or seven months he was able to hide from you the struggle which he passed through before deciding his vocation and his dread of telling you what was his decision. The first time that he spoke to me of the missions I saw that his heart was wrung at the thought of the sacrifice he must demand of you and of his mother. The difficulties of his vocation he referred to as 'little trials,' 'little sacrifices.' He could not imagine himself doing anything heroic; besides, to him, all that we weak men can do for Almighty God seems pitifully small. He confided to me that to carry your consent by assault, and later to make the parting easier, he was determined to be calm and matter-of-fact and to avoid all tenderness, which explains the apparent lack of feeling that more than once cut you to the heart, but which helped, perhaps, to prepare you for this day. Only God and our Blessed Mother, confidants of all he suffered, know what it cost him to be always calm and strong. That he was bringing you pain was from first to last his own sharpest pain.

"After Just's entrance into the Foreign Mission Seminary he had his hours of wavering and of sadness. He never deliberately spoke to me

of these, but a word in one of his letters showed me that he sometimes suffered thus. Certainly his tranquillity and firmness made it appear that heroism was easy to him; and in truth his soul was so pure and so habitually turned towards God that it would never have occurred to him to refuse Him anything. This spiritual vigor developed greatly during his three years at Rue du Bac. He admired and praised it in others without being conscious of possessing it in a higher degree than they.

“Convinced of his frailty, in proportion as his strength grew, he longed for the help of others’ prayers, and frequently asked for it. One day he begged me to obtain for him a share in my sister’s prayers, and added, ‘Tell her that this is a serious case. It won’t do for her to remember my needs for a few days and then forget all about them. She must keep on and on. The glory of God is at stake.’

“He spoke freely of the mortifications practiced by his fellow students, but always to say that he was incapable of imitating them; and all the while we, his friends, were seeing him pitiless towards himself. He braved fatigue, cold, and hunger: the rest is God’s secret.—

“In a word, from the day when I first met Just until I saw him leave us for Korea he served God ever more and more faithfully, humbly, sweetly, valiantly. I will close this letter by telling you what he asked of me before he left.

'Pray,' he said, 'that I may be martyred, and that no one will ever know it.' "

To return to Just and his fellow travelers: as soon as they were fairly started on their way they chanted the *Te Deum*; then whispered the prayers which at that hour were being said by the community at the seminary. Afterwards, it was agreed that every one was free to sleep, but all were too happy and too much excited to rest, and they passed the night in sweet, intimate talk. The party reached Boulogne on the following day, July sixteenth, at four o'clock in the afternoon. Four brothers, named Germain, whose lives were devoted to good works, received them with open arms and took them to the house in which they were to lodge. The next morning all said Mass in a convent chapel, and in the afternoon made an excursion to a nearby chateau.

It was on the nineteenth that the party set sail. After saying Mass that morning in one of the churches of the city they grouped themselves about the main altar and offered to the Blessed Virgin a medallion on which were engraved their names and their destinations. It was at three in the afternoon that the *Said* left port; by four o'clock they were well under way.

Just had written to his parents on reaching Boulogne, but before leaving France he sent a last word to his dearly loved brother: "Walk without faltering in the way of detachment, which is what Our Lord asks of you. Do not look back after putting your hands to the plough.



FATHER ROBERT WITH HIS CHOIR BOYS IN TAIKOU, KOREA
(See Page 171)

Adieu, dear brother! If you ever come to Marseilles remember that the lonely rocks at the feet of Our Lady's statue offer a splendid place for meditation. I was there alone at sunset last evening, and prayed to our Mother for all whom I love."

CHAPTER VI.

THE LONG VOYAGE.

The missionaries told the story of their long voyage to the Orient in happy, playful, often witty letters, penned under difficulties, in the midst of hardships and the disappointment of ever-recurring delays. Soon after sailing from Marseilles Just wrote to his family, "Some of us have already learned what it means to be sea-sick, but that is a small matter. We were never happier than we have been since leaving Paris. Every evening we sit in the bow of the boat and sing the *Ave Maris Stella* and other hymns peculiarly suited to our present needs. Afterwards, we say our beads and our night prayers together, and then talk cosily, usually about our good fortune in being missionaries. Truly ours is a sublime vocation! I cannot tell you how happy our evenings are! . . . We see on all sides only sea and sky, and know that every moment the hand of the Lord is carrying us nearer and nearer to our mission.

"We expect to reach Alexandria this evening, spend the night on board, and at eight in the morning take a train for Cairo and Suez. This morning—it is Sunday—we had Mass on deck, and after having been deprived of the joy for

a few days, how we did appreciate it! I have no words to express our happiness—but you understand. You can easily believe that this has been the happiest of all our days on the sea. We foresee that we shall not have time to say Mass to-morrow at Alexandria, but may Our Saviour be praised for all things! Pray often that I may live for Him alone. This is the grace that a missionary needs and the one I most desire; or, at least, that I long to desire. As for you, dear Father and dear Mother, may you, too, live all for Him who tries and blesses you at the same time, and is preparing for you a beautiful recompense in the world to come.

"I embrace all at home, Father, Mother, Brother. Good-bye.

"Your son JUST.

"Aboard the *Said*, eighty miles from Alexandria."

At six o'clock the following morning a boat took the missionaries from the steamer to a train which ran from Alexandria¹ to Cairo. The locomotive was of a primitive type, and at first could not be induced to start. The heat was intense and the car crowded, so from beginning to end the trip was uncomfortable, but it was strange and interesting. As Father de Bretenières wrote, "At the first station we found a great crowd of Turkish men and women, many of them squatted on the ground and some shrieking

¹ The Suez Canal had not yet been opened.

in an ear-splitting way. We got out and walked about for half an hour listening to the hubbub and seeing so much misery that I went back to the train with an aching heart. Hundreds of women reduced to the condition of beasts of burden, and thousands of poor people living in the darkness of Mohammedanism! As we continued our journey the roads were literally lined with a procession of Mussulmen, mounted upon asses, horses, or mules, or trudging on foot in a heat far more intense than anything we knew at home. Whenever we passed a tree we were certain to see people crowded about it. Men, women, and beasts would be lying in the shade and children bathing in dirty ponds in company with the cattle. You are probably wondering what was the destination of all this multitude. Not far from Cairo is the village of Tantah — a group of miserable mud houses covered with branches dried in the sun. To the Mussulman the place is sacred, for it contains the tomb of a Mohammedan monk. On the day we passed through a great fair was being held there, which accounts for the enormous and motley crowd which we saw all along our way. The noise and confusion were indescribable. Fortunately we made but a short stop at Tantah. After we left it the pyramids came in sight, mysterious, calm, symbolic. We reached Cairo at half past one."

Writing a little later Father de Bretenières said, "I should be lost if I attempted to describe to you this country in which nothing is

like our own, neither plants, nor birds, nor beasts, nor men. My heart aches to see these multitudes who in all good faith are serving God so strangely, but I love my Koreans better than they and rejoice to know that I am getting nearer and nearer to my own country. This afternoon we visited the mosque of Mohamet Ali."

He broke off without giving any description of the excursion, but Father Beaulieu wrote a very amusing one. "Towards evening," he said, "we mounted our asses. Imagine the ten big, hearty fellows whom you know so well seated for the first time on poor, little, long-eared beasts and passing through the crowded, littered streets of the city in the wake of our guides, and followed by other Arabs whose business it was to urge on the laggards of the party. The asses trotted or galloped through streets as crowded as the boulevards of Paris with men who did not take the trouble to get out of our way, with women and children seated in the dust before their wretched cabins, and dogs too lazy even to bark. Thus did we make our way to the great mosque of Cairo.

"The ascent is easy so we reached Mohamet Ali's tomb without incident. The same cannot be said for the descent. After a short visit we remounted our asses, and imagining that we had become adepts by this time started off at a trot. Woe unto us! In the most crowded and fashionable part of the city Fathers Huin and

Lesserteur were unable to check the dizzy pace of their asses, and suddenly they found themselves passing over their ears with more haste than dignity—to the great amusement of the natives. They landed on a heap of rubbish. Do not think, however, that this little accident disgusted us with riding on asses. We made another excursion that same day.”

It was Father de Bretenières who described the second trip, undertaken at his suggestion. “While we were at supper,” he said, “we decided to make another sort of pilgrimage that evening. In an oasis, three miles from Cairo, there is an old, old tree at whose base, so tradition says, the Holy Family rested as they came into Egypt. You can imagine how eager we were to visit a spot where our dear Lord probably reposed; so, at nine o’clock, we set out accompanied by native guides who carried lanterns. We passed through the streets of the city, looking as strange as we felt, and softly singing hymns all the while to the accompaniment of the trotting of our asses. On reaching the desert they began to gallop. I assure you that in all your life you never saw as funny a spectacle as we made. I shall not attempt to describe it. Imagine it for yourselves. You cannot make the picture too ridiculous. We reached our oasis by midnight in spite of tumbles and somersaults, for such trifles were not allowed to interfere with the speed of the party as a whole. Whenever anyone fell behind he overtook the rest as quickly as possible to

escape the jibes of the Arabs, who had great fun at our expense. We grouped ourselves on one side of the tree, and twenty or twenty-five natives, drawn by curiosity, ranged themselves on the other. We sang the *Ave Maris Stella* and recited the prayers we used to say on Saturday evenings at the oratory in Paris. It was a sweet reminder of that dear seminary of which I can never think without feeling my heart beat fast. You do not know how deeply I love it. I did not know myself until I came away. It enshrines my sweetest memories. Praise be to God!—

“We reached our lodging place at three o’clock in the morning. I had not fallen once, but some of the others — Father Beaulieu, among them — count their tumbles by the half dozens. No one was hurt, however, although Father Huin had a narrow escape. He would surely have broken some of his bones if his ass had not obligingly landed underneath when they fell into a hole. We had to pull the poor beast out by his tail.

“At four o’clock we began to say our Masses in the church of the Franciscan Fathers. It was the first time that most of us had had the joy since leaving Marseilles. Note that it was July twenty-sixth, St. Anne’s feast day and yours, Mother. It was your patron which obtained for me this consolation whose rarity, added to our isolation in a pagan land, made it extraordinarily precious. I am sure that our dear Lord gave you a great part of the merit of the Divine Sacrifice,

offered in that stronghold of Mohammedanism.

"At seven o'clock that morning we took the train for Suez and passed almost exactly over the way which the Israelites traveled from Egypt to the Red Sea. We can imagine from our short experiences here what the heat of the desert is. That evening, after three or four hours' delay in Seuz, a boat took us to our steamer, the *Cambodia*.

"Suez is a group of huts made of earth and rough stones in which live several thousands of Arabs, Egyptians, Blacks, and Europeans. We saw no vegetation except a few sickly trees in the court of a little hotel built by a European for the accommodation of European travelers. It is a sad, sad place. There is a poor little chapel where Our Lord is adored only by two or three Franciscan Fathers who are alone in the midst of the pagan multitude. We were overjoyed to find their haven of rest where we threw ourselves at Our Saviour's feet.

"The *Cambodia* is one of the largest of the mail boats and has a crew of two hundred men. There are only forty or fifty passengers. About thirty of the sailors are Frenchmen, and the rest Chinamen, negroes, Malays, etc., and each wears the costume of his own country. It is a Babylon where all languages are spoken and many religions practiced. I am writing to you squatted on the steps that lead to the forecastle, and from here I see three negroes beating their

hands rhythmically and monotonously singing their prayers to I do not know what pagan god.

"I told you that we boarded the *Cambodia* on the evening of July twenty-sixth. It was not until ten o'clock the next morning that her anchor was raised and we set sail on this sea so rich in associations. We chanted the psalm *In Exitu* at the spot where the Hebrews are thought to have crossed it, and we had a fine view of Mt. Sinai, so you see how close to the Bible we are living. We are very happy.

"We are not making good time. It is Sunday and we have no hope of reaching Aden before Wednesday, when we shall have been eight days on the Red sea. Often we make only five knots an hour, instead of twelve or thirteen, as we did on the Mediterranean, partly because some of our boilers burst a few days ago. One by one they are being mended, so we shall soon be able to go faster.

"Our captain and several of the officers are good Catholics. As soon as we came aboard the captain put at our disposal a little room where we may say Mass whenever the weather permits; in return, he asked our prayers for himself and the crew, and requested that if the weather is favorable we should have one Mass on deck every Sunday, that all who wish may be present. So, this morning an awning was stretched over one end of the deck, and on a simple but very nice little altar Father Beaulieu offered the Holy Sacrifice. How beautiful it was, that Mass said

on the sea with only sky and water to be seen in all directions! Many were present, the captain and first mate among the rest, and they knelt devoutly from beginning to end. Gloria in excelsis Deo!

"Monday, August first. I am anxious to finish my letter to-day. We are making better time now. Our boilers are in order and an English vessel is giving us chase, and our captain does not want it to pass us. The heat is so intense that my paper gets damp as I write, but we do not find it hard to bear. Fans are suspended from the ceiling and little Chinese boys pull strings which keep them in motion. It is funny to see, and the effect is delightful. In fact, without the fans we should be in danger of heat prostration. Despite the weather we are all well, thanks to the good Mother who has us in her care. She fills our hearts with joy, and the little sufferings which fall to our lot as we travel are sweetened by the thought that our Divine Savior endured far greater ones. We really ought to suffer some discomfort; suffering is the daily bread of a missionary. . . . I hope that you rejoice, dear Father and Mother, in the thought of having sacrificed to God's service what you love best in this world. No matter how little I am worth, if you make your offering generously Our Lord will reward you superabundantly.

"Good-bye, my loved ones. God be with you always!

"JUST."

Only ten days later Father de Bretenières wrote another, but much shorter, letter to his parents, saying, "To-morrow we expect to reach Pointe de Galle (Ceylon) where we shall meet the Paris mail, which is the reason that I am writing a few more lines to you. Our trip has been very happy. We reached Aden in the morning of August second, but did not land. The heat was so intense that it would have been rash, and the officers urged us to remain where we were. We left there after ten hours' stay, and ever since the sea has been rough, and for two days the wind was very high. One of our sails was carried away, and in spite of its size our boat was tossed about like a cork. Often waves swept over the deck and carried with them all that was not nailed to it. I managed to keep up for two or three hours but seasickness got the better of me at last. I was obliged to go to my cabin and did not reappear for several days. A furious sea is a magnificent spectacle — but oh, if it would only treat us poor mortals better! We were a ridiculous party those three days, I do assure you.

"Now the weather is lovely, though you can judge from my writing that the sea is still rough. I am squatted in a sheltered corner, or more than once since I began this I should have turned a somersault. Again I repeat, we were *very* happy. There is a thought that comes often to our minds: we hope that the little sufferings which our dear Lord sends us from time to

time are good not only for us, but also for the precious souls to whom we have been sent. It fills us with joy to believe this.

"We skirted the coast of Africa and the Island of Socotra and did not see land again until last evening when we passed close to a little island of the Maldivé Archipelago. It was covered with cocoanut trees, and all unlike Suez and Aden.

"Our greatest privation is being unable to say Mass. This gives us pain, but Our Lord will not forget it. Sunday passed like any other day, but it was God's will. Amen."

Father de Bretenières wrote again, only a week later, as the *Cambodia* passed through the Strait of Malacca. "Dear Father, dear Mother, dear Brother," he began; "This is the first calm day we have had since we left Aden and I am taking advantage of it lest the good weather should not last. I expected to be able to send my last letter by a French mail from Ceylon, but we were too late to catch it. The *Erymanthe* left port two hours before we reached it. It is a miserable harbor, by the way, and the entrance is dangerous, especially in a full sea such as we had at the time. But Our Lady watches over us constantly so all went well. On Thursday, August eleventh, about nine o'clock in the morning we cast anchor close to some English war ships. Even in the harbor the sea was so furious that one of our heavy cables snapped like a thread. A brig which entered after us was

dashed against the rocks and struck a leak, but every one aboard was saved. Our boat rocked so violently that only ourselves, two officers, and two other passengers attempted to land.

"To disembark we were obliged to seize a moment when the little native boat was lifted on the waves almost to the height of the ladder of our ship, and then, just at the right instant to jump into the midst of the sailors, who caught us as we fell. The first nine of us succeeded admirably but Father Huin, who was last to jump, gave us a fright by missing his aim and slipping under the ladder, where he hung over the water by his hands and feet. Some one went quickly to his rescue, and his second effort was successful. I have rarely seen anything as funny as the whole scene.

"On landing, the first thing we did was to rest, for the long rough passage from Aden had tired us all. I could tell you many curious things about this beautiful island of Ceylon, but it would take too long. Nothing is like what we saw at home. The costumes are strange and varied. The canoes of the natives are made of the hollowed trunks of cocoanut trees. They are long but so narrow that it is possible to keep only one leg inside; the other rests on the rim.

"Of course we went to see the Father in charge of the mission. He received us like brothers and we remained with him for twenty-four hours. His little church and house are at the entrance to a great grove of cocoanut trees. We

had hardly arrived before boys brought us nuts to use for drinking cups. We were fed like the Indians on cocoanuts, bananas, a vegetable not unlike potatoes, and thin rice cakes baked on the coals. I was delighted to live as one does on the missions; such food is more suitable for us than delicacies prepared by a French cook. In the morning we all said Mass. For me and for several of the others it was the second time since we left Marseilles, so you can understand why we were so eager to land. Missioners have a right to privations in this life, but one that cuts to the heart is being deprived of the privilege of saying Mass. Our Lord has willed that we should taste it, and like all else that comes from His loving hands it brings sweetness as well as suffering. Whatever comes we can only say, 'Blessed be the Lord!'

"The roughness of the sea made it difficult to coal the *Cambodia*, so we were obliged to remain at Pointe de Galle for two days. It was not until Saturday, at two in the afternoon, that we were ready to set sail."

At Ceylon fresh partings began for the missioners. Two of their number, Fathers Verdier and Barré, there left their friends to go to Pondicherry. For fear of breaking down good-byes were quickly said, but not so quickly that no tears were shed. Father Beaulieu's notes, after a few sad words about the separation, hasten to change the subject: "On Sunday, and on Monday, feast of the Assumption, we were able to

say Mass. The sea was perfectly calm, and is so still. We hope to reach Singapore by Wednesday morning. I shall entrust my diary to Father Patriat whom it will be a great joy to see again. In two weeks we hope to reach Shanghai, and will not be sorry to be where we can resume our quiet, regular, community life."

A few days later another parting wounded the loving hearts of the missionaries. Father Grousseau separated from his companions to go to Siam. The valiant little band counted only seven when the *Cambodia* approached the mouth of the Saigon river. It was going at full speed when from a little Annamite boat a voice called, "Father Guerrin, are you on board?"

All the missionaries hurried to the deck and were in time to see two of their old friends of the Foreign Mission seminary whom they had expected to meet at Singapore, but who, obliged to take advantage of the trade winds, had been unable to wait longer for them. They were on their way to Cochin-China. Messages were called back and forth and letters were exchanged, but very quickly the boats were too far apart for any communication. The Koreans had looked forward to the meeting and were keenly disappointed, but their *fiat* was soon said. As Father de Bretenières remarked in regard to another of their trials, "The apostolate is one long renouncement."

In Saigon the missionaries lodged in the episcopal palace—a pretty little cabin, built of wood.

From there they went to Singapore whence they soon started for Hongkong. When the *Cambodia* was about to pass by night through the dangerous Strait of Malacca the look-out vainly tried to see the signal which in those waters took the place of a light-house. The captain, a man of strong faith, seeing Fathers de Bretenières and Beaulieu standing together approached them, and said, "Gentlemen, please say a Hail Mary at once that we may see the signal." Much edified the two priests knelt where they were and said a fervent Hail Mary and three times the invocation, "Star of the Sea, pray for us." Instantly the signal fire became visible. The next morning the captain, meeting Father de Bretenières as he left his cabin, said to him, "Your prayers were answered last night, but say more of them. We are not yet safe. In half an hour we must pass between other dangerous rocks."

On August twenty-eight the *Cambodia* safely reached Hongkong, the end of its journey. To transfer the trunks and boxes confided to the young priests for the missions of Hongkong, Manchuria, and Korea, from the ship to the wharf and from there to the mission house proved to be a difficult task, for modern methods were then unknown—at least in China. The baggage being heavy the three strongest were chosen to care for it, Father de Bretenières among the number. Armed with long bamboo sticks, provided by the captain, they started towards the wharf in a junk. All went well until they tried

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to reach an agreement about wages—always a difficult matter to settle with the Chinese, and the coolies in question proved to be particularly stubborn and unreasonable. When, after much wearisome haggling a certain sum was agreed upon the men seemed to be satisfied, but soon they stopped working and declared that the promised wage was not sufficient. More discussion followed, interminable and exasperating. The coolies would not listen to reason. A Christian whispered to Father de Bretenières, “Unless the Fathers appear to be angry we shall never get away from here without losing a number of boxes.” Acting on this suggestion Just said threateningly, “In a moment we shall begin to strike all who do not obey us. Then you will see how strong we are.” The effect was magical—but not in the way the missionaries had hoped. The coolies absolutely refused to move at all. The Fathers talked in loud voices and made menacing gestures: to no purpose. A crowd had gathered by this time and there was danger that all their baggage would be stolen. They had become terribly anxious when a policeman appeared. He dispersed the crowd in no gentle way and the porters, cowed at last, resumed their work.

Twenty-four hours later the missionaries boarded a little American ship which took them to Canton. The Koreans went there only to accompany Father Guerrin. On the wharf they had further trouble about their baggage and no policeman

appeared opportunely, but their first experience had taught them many things and they reached Bishop Guillemin's house without having lost any of their precious boxes. Father de Bretenières wrote, "A poor episcopal palace: some wretched huts crowded together and facing on a narrow alley. But what a bishop, and what a father! I knelt at his feet and he gave me his blessing."

The four Koreans soon returned to Hongkong, where they found letters awaiting them which gave new instructions. They were told to remain in Hongkong for a month instead of going directly to Shanghai, which is unhealthy in September. "Hongkong is a veritable Babylon," Just wrote. "There are people here of all religions. In walking through the streets we sometimes see within the shops a greater or less number of candles burning in honor of the proprietor's ancestors. Yesterday I saw a Chinaman in the middle of the street before one of the temples, taking great pains to make five or six little, lighted sticks stand straight between two stones. The god in whose honor he was taking so much trouble did not seem to be pleased with his efforts for the sticks fell in all directions, extinguishing their fires. But the good fellow was not discouraged, and tried again and again. We saw another man walking through the streets carrying half a dozen paper devils strung on a stick, each of them painted in many colors and all horribly grotesque. They were to be

burned in honor of other, more important demons. Oh the happiness of being a Christian!"

The instructions sent to Father de Bretenières and his companions directed that from Shanghai they should go by sea to the mouth of the Leao Ho river and from there travel south-east by land through the province of Leao Tong in Manchuria. In this province, and under the jurisdiction of the vicar-apostolic, Bishop Verrolles, they were to pass the winter. When spring came they were to try to enter Korea. Father de Bretenières told his parents of these arrangements, and added, "Since the good Lord wishes us to wander a long time before reaching the Promised Land, His holy will be done! We were never happier than we are now. As for you, my dear ones, place yourselves unreservedly in God's hands. We are all wayfarers here. Our fatherland above is surpassingly beautiful and nothing can satisfy the longings of our hearts, little as they are, but the eternal possession of Him Whom we love to folly. They say that I was foolish to come to Korea, but it is a foolishness that costs little, and is very sweet to a heart such as I wish mine to become and as I hope with God's grace that it will be some day."

This letter gave details of the last stages of the long journey, and concluded by saying, "Do not expect to hear from me soon again. After we leave here communication with the outer world will be difficult. Good-bye, dear Father and Mother. Serve God with all your strength

and pray that I may serve Him, too. Forgive me all the pain I ever caused you—and forgive this endless, wordy letter which I send because I think it may give you pleasure. Good-bye, dear Christian. Where are you now? I do not know, but I think of you often and pray much for you. There is really no need of my writing to you. The one thing necessary is that we should love Jesus with our whole hearts. Good-bye, each one, and may Our Saviour give you His peace and His joy!”

At the end of September the four Koreans embarked for Shanghai, and there they took passage for Leao Tong. The roughness of the sea and a high wind made navigation difficult, and the pilot being unskillful they were dashed against the river bank; and hardly had they gained the open sea when a storm arose which for two days and three nights threatened the vessel with shipwreck and drove it close to the coast of Korea. How longingly the missionaries gazed upon its rugged outline! A few calm days followed, then more bad weather, but the party reached the Leao Ho safely at last. Writing aboard ship Father de Bretenièrès said,

“Our long journey is almost ended. Please have some Masses said at an altar dedicated to the Blessed Virgin to thank her for her protection and to obtain for us all the graces we need to make us good missionaries.

“We shall land at Ing Tze, and there seek some means of transporting the trunks and boxes

which were entrusted to our care for the mission of Manchuria and Korea. It seems that they have little, slow-moving carts, and we are going to try to rent one. We had to leave Shanghai without passports but do not anticipate any trouble on that score. . . .

"I interrupted my letter to take a walk with my brothers. The water is so quiet to-day that I can almost believe that I am on a Swiss lake. In two or three hours we shall enter the mouth of the river. Thanks be to God! After a journey as long and perilous as ours has been a man feels like thanking God again and again. Unite your voices with ours which are so feeble. We are in the midst of a pagan people and see much to sadden us, and although we are trying to accustom ourselves to our surroundings we often think of the magnificent churches of France and the sublimity of Divine worship there. But it was for Our Lord that we left some of the beauties of our holy religion, and if in reward for this sacrifice He permits us to save souls, how happy we shall be! God's will now and always! We are offering Him our little mite of good will and our little share of suffering.

"We are exceptionally well cared for aboard this ship. Everyone treats us with utmost kindness and does everything to make us comfortable. The captain speaks English and German, and his mate speaks English, so I have talked both languages — after a fashion — for three weeks. It is such a pity that these splendid fel-

lows are not Catholics. They often ask questions about our Faith. Sometimes we sing beautiful bits of plain chant which charm the captain who, by the way, is full of admiration for all missionaries. May God draw to Himself a soul so upright and so rich in true charity!

“I have read and re-read the letter from home which reached me at Shanghai, and cannot tell you all the joy I feel because God asks of you, dear Father and dear Mother, the sacrifice of your second son that he, too, may be a priest. Of course your hearts ache, and ache sorely, but Our dear Lord wishes your gratitude to be stronger even than your grief. I know that you praise and bless Him for the great graces He has showered on Christian.”

CHAPTER VII.

A WINTER IN MANCHURIA.

On the twenty-eighth of October, after twenty-two days at sea, the weary little band set foot on the soil of Manchuria. Fathers Huin and de Bretenières at once sought out some English merchants, recommended as honest and reliable, who procured for them two carts and two saddle horses, and invited them to a dinner. As soon as the meal was ended the missionaries started on a strange journey through that strange land. The prevailing mode of travel was far more picturesque than comfortable. Father Dorie and Father Beaulieu mounted the two small, fat, Manchurian horses. The saddles were peculiar and the stirrups very high. They were directed to allow their right arms to hang and to lean forward after the approved Chinese fashion of the day. Fathers Huin and de Bretenières had to make a running jump to get into carriages painted light blue on the outside and on the inside ornamented with white tulle embroidered in black, and so small that Father de Bretenières was at a loss what to do with his long legs. The mules that drew them set forth at an incredibly slow pace through mud which often reached to the axles of the wheels; and later, on getting out of the mire,

they trotted over rocky slopes, mercilessly throwing the travelers against the top and sides of their cages, until they were bruised and sore from head to foot.

When night approached the guides insisted on stopping at an inn, which, in Manchuria, meant a long hall, inconceivably dirty, with fires kept burning beneath the brick floor from October until April so that the guests would not suffer greatly from the intense cold. Not knowing one word of the language, and anxious to arouse no suspicion, and if possible not even to excite curiosity, the missionaries were in a delicate position. Thanks to their presence of mind, and perhaps, too, to a boyish sense of fun in the adventure, they played their difficult parts well. With great dignity and in absolute silence they took their places on the floor with as much ease as if they had never known chairs. Fortunately, they had been told that each guest's mat must serve successively as seat, table, and bed.

But they could not escape observation, nor fail to arouse curiosity, dressed entirely in black as they were, and despite themselves, foreign in appearance and manner. Soon a circle of curious Manchurians surrounded them, watching every movement. Very gravely the missionaries lit their pipes, and seeming to pay no heed to their audience they smoked tranquilly. After a time a strange repast was served on stranger dishes. The missionaries knew that it would not be prudent for them to eat in public: their fellow guests

would then see how unaccustomed they were to Chinese food and to Chinese customs, and they would lose all prestige by making themselves ridiculous. Father Huin saved the day. By a haughty gesture he signified that the strangers desired to be alone, and the spectators reluctantly withdrew. As soon as they were gone the priests ate in peace, with no little fun over the queer dishes and their own peculiar table manners.

Covered with vermin from the filthy inn, they set forth at daybreak the next morning, and reached the nearest mission, Yang Kouan (Our Lady of the Sun) in time to say Mass. Father Métayer, of the Paris Foreign Mission Society, was in charge there, and warmed their hearts by his cordial welcome. Three days later the little band left Our Lady of the Sun for the residence of Bishop Verrolles, about forty-five miles away—too long a journey for one day, because the roads were in a deplorable condition. An annoying accident interrupted the first day's travel, when the wagon which carried the priests and all their belongings overturned in the mud. No one was much hurt, but to get the wagon on its wheels once more and to load into it the mud-covered trunks and provisions was a hard and disagreeable task. The party passed the night in the house of excellent Christians, where with no fear of mockery they ate, or tried to eat, Chinese-fashion.

The following day they had their first encounters with the brigands who infested all lonely

places in Manchuria; but the outlaws, seeing a French flag which the missionaries had placed on the front of their wagon, thought it best to allow them to pass unharmed. At dusk other more desperate brigands surrounded the party and insisted on having at least their hand luggage. "If you dare to touch it you will see what happens," the driver said menacingly. Intimidated, but not yet beaten, the brigands kept close to the wagon for an entire hour, during which the four black-clad missionaries said not a word, and never took their hands from pockets that, the outlaws feared, might contain European pistols, of which they knew enough to be in terror. At last prudence gained the upper hand and they turned back, leaving the priests and their belongings untouched; and all the while the four had kept their hands in their pockets because they were cold!

Late in the evening they saw, faintly outlined against the sky, the little Gothic tower of the church of our Lady of the Snow, the village in which Bishop Verrolles made his headquarters; and a few minutes later he was welcoming them as lovingly as their own fathers could have done. Despite the poverty and the smallness of his house he kept them with him for two weeks. Father Huin was then sent to The Valley of the Willow, Father Beaulieu to The Desert of the West, Father Dorie to Wolf Valley, and Father de Bretenières back to Our Lady of the Sun, the mission of Father Métayer.

Manchuria is intensely cold in winter, the tem-



M U K D E N , M A N C H U R I A

perature often falling to thirty degrees below zero, and necessarily Father de Bretenières' first care was to adopt the costume of the country, not only that he might be inconspicuous, but for the sake of its warmth. He wrote to his parents, "My feet are now at home in an immense pair of fur-trimmed Chinese shoes, and three pairs of socks, one of them wadded. I wear long trousers, also wadded and at least an inch thick, and over them a long gown lined with lamb's wool, and over that a kind of waistcoat, black with an otter skin collar, and last of all a blue vest, also lined with lamb's wool. For my head I have a fur cap which I wear under a big black Chinese hat with a turned-up brim. I shall say nothing of various other vests, nor of little muffs for each hand." Thus attired Just, tall and thin though he was, must have been literally as broad as he was long!

Under the tuition of Father Métayer he began to study the extremely difficult language of the country, and from the first learned with wonderful facility. "In this line I am making quite a reputation among the Christians of Our Lady of the Sun," he wrote. "Only three or four days after my arrival Father Métayer asked me to bless a marriage. To make it possible for me to do so he wrote in Chinese the questions I had to ask the bride and groom. As you may imagine I understood what I was saying about as well as if I had been talking Hebrew, but succeeded so well that the people took me for an old missionary.

Father Métayer had to bite his lips to keep from laughing."

Shortly after this Bishop Verrolles went to Peking, taking Father Métayer with him, and Father de Bretenières was left in charge of the mission. He loved his work too intensely to be lonely in his solitude. At last he was leading the life of a missionary priest and his heart was supremely content. "I am very happy to be doing my little part," he wrote. "Until now I never had a real care or a real responsibility. I have them now. I am making an apprenticeship, and rejoice to find that things go fairly well. My life is uneventful and regular, because at present there is very little sickness. I talk as best I can with the good Manchurians who come to watch me eat and to ask innumerable questions about France, the seminary in Paris from which missionaries come to them, my own relatives, etc. I give some hours each day to my little exercises of piety, and to the study of Chinese, that I may learn both to speak and to write it."

Difficult as the language is, in less than three months Just was able easily to exercise his sacred ministry and to talk with the Christians. Father Paik Chen Fou (White as Snow) was the name by which he was known. In the modest little church left to his care he faithfully carried out the ceremonies he loved so well. In one of his interesting letters he said, "I am preparing to keep Holy Week with all possible pomp, but my best efforts will not rival the splendor of the

services in Paris. My poor little chapel is only ten feet high, and I have but one voice in my choir. While I say Mass I hear rats scurrying about on the paper ceiling over the altar. Truly it is all as poor as the stable of Bethlehem, but sometimes on feast days when I chant the *Gloria* or the *Credo* my heart swells with emotion that has in it far more of joy than of sadness. . . .

"If I am not too late in saying so, I would rather have a censor, plain but of good quality, and an untrimmed alb, than the revolver which you were asked to send me."

In another letter, written to Father Lesserteur who was stationed in Tongking, he said, "I wish you could have seen me pontificate on Easter Sunday. I had eight acolytes, all as proud as peacocks in the strangest surplices in the world. Unfortunately the music was not quite worthy of the occasion. For choir I have one young Chinaman who by dint of studying plain chant for several years has at last learned to sing off the note. In consequence, the Chinese regard him as a prodigy. When I tried to chant the *Haec Dies* and the verse that follows the unfortunate man gave me a wrong note three or four times. In the end I improvised as best I could. But it made no difference. The people were charmed, and I assure you that I was supremely happy."

In his hours of enforced leisure Father Paik Chen Fou sometimes hunted in the mountains, and when he had unusually good luck would take his game to Father Beaulieu. "He is my nearest

neighbor," Just wrote. "His mission is only five hours' trip across the mountains, and you can imagine how great is the temptation to go to see him from time to time. We drink the health of our absent friends in a strange beverage which the Chinese have the audacity to call 'water of life.' "

To travel on foot was considered unfitting the dignity of a priest so Father de Bretenières had a wild little horse to carry him over the wretched mountain roads. He wrote laughingly of his experiences: "I know now what it means to pass over the ears of one's horse; however I have never hurt myself. Little Father Dorie, who came here two days ago, had a tumble or two on his way but, like myself, escaped without breaking anything."

While Father Dorie was at Our Lady of the Sun he fell ill with chicken-pox, and for two or three weeks Just nursed him with brotherly tenderness. To add to his cares brigands made their appearance in the neighborhood. "Having a good gun I slept soundly in spite of them," he said. "This country is infested with thieves and murderers. The authorities beheaded whole bands of them in Kai Tchou which is only a few miles from here. Not long ago they broke into the house nearest mine, but they have never come nearer than that." Later, some of the outlaws did enter his cabin. After a struggle he succeeded in throwing them out—then tranquilly went back to bed.

That in the midst of his strange and seemingly distracting surroundings Father de Bretenières's spiritual life did not suffer is evidenced by letters written to his confrères. Every hour of every day he tried to be true to his vocation of priest and missionary and to keep his soul ever turned towards God in childlike confidence, and with the humility which—though he did not suspect it—had always been one of his marked characteristics. The following lines, taken from one of his letters, give a little glimpse of his soul: "Your letter of last September gave me the greatest of pleasure. I see how brightly the love of God burns in your heart and feel ashamed of my coldness and tepidity. Pray for your poor brother. I, on my part, will remember you in my miserable prayers. Let us both meditate often on Our Lord's passion."

At first Just did not know how long he would be obliged to remain in Manchuria, but soon Bishop Berneux of Seoul arranged that on May fifth the four new missionaries should be met on the little island of Melinto. If this plan failed, perhaps a second attempt of the kind would be made on the twenty-fifth of July, but only after another sort of ruse had been tried: a boat from Korea would pretend to be driven by an ill wind to the coast of Manchuria; the missionaries would steal into it, and concealed in its hull sail for their Promised Land. During the long weeks of waiting for winter and spring to pass Father de Bretenières left the issue entirely in God's hands.

Until the twenty-fourth of April he worked hard at Our Lady of the Sun, leaving it then for Our Lady of the Snow where he was to meet his companions that together they might make a first attempt to enter Korea, always most jealously guarded against all strangers and Christians in particular.

In a good-bye letter to his parents, he said, "This is the last letter that you will get from me for a year. I am sorry you must have this privation, but in another sense I do not regret it because, like every other suffering, it will bring with it many graces. The way to heaven is strewn with thorns; the more they tear our feet the better. An hour of suffering here is worth more than a year of pleasure." As for himself, a long novitiate of mortification, of prayer, and of detachment had prepared him for the suffering awaiting him, such suffering as we shrink from thinking of, but as its crown such glory as only the "white-robed army" knows.

The last news from Korea had been of a revolution in the palace which seemed to promise toleration for Christianity. In Thibet and Tongking conditions were menacing and Just thought enviously of the missionaries in both places for whom martyrdom was probable. Regarding them he wrote to Father Albrand, "It is hard on the missions, but consoling for the missionaries, who can hope for martyrdom. When I think of them I am tempted to complain because Our Saviour did not call me to so great a grace. Of course I

am unworthy of it, but have not some great sinners received it?"

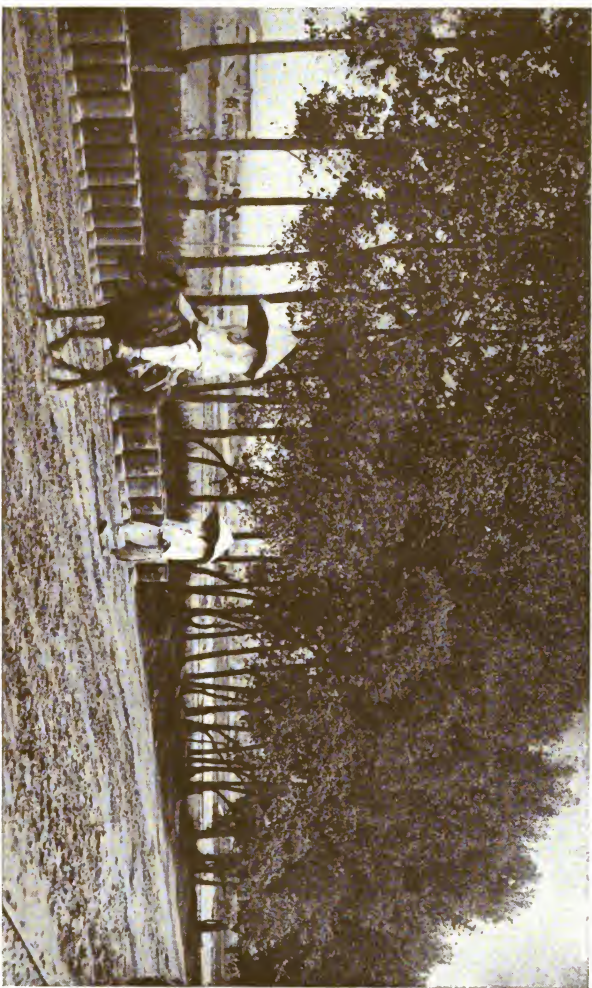
He little knew that not one of his friends was as near as he to the goal of his heart's desire.

CHAPTER VIII.

KOREA AT LAST.

On the twenty-sixth day of April Father de Bretenières joined his friends at Our Lady of the Snow. Their final preparations made, they confided themselves anew to our Blessed Mother's care and set forth on horseback from Tsouang Heu, a village on the Gulf of Korea. There they found at anchor the junk which was to take them to Melinto. It had nothing to recommend it except the fearlessness and honesty of its Chinese crew, and a nice little deck which the missionaries could enjoy whenever the weather permitted. They had to share a dirty, ill-smelling room, six feet square and very low, which was reached through a hole in the deck.

A very rough sea made it impossible for them to sail before the third of May. For two days, then, all went well; on the third, when they were far from the mainland, the wind changed suddenly and a severe storm threatened, obliging them to seek shelter at Kio Tao, a small island about forty-five miles north of Melinto. It was inhabited by swarthy savages who refused to have anything to do with the strangers. For eight days the party was marooned in this inhospitable place, while a storm raged which threatened utterly to



K O R E A N S I N M O U R N I N G G A R B
(See Page 111)

destroy the junk, and so terrified the natives that they shrieked and moaned in a way horrible to hear. Day and night the sailors worked, almost in despair, and the missionaries prayed unceasingly. Father Huin afterwards declared that during those days he did more penance than throughout the whole of any Lent he had ever passed. Because of the delay the junk's supply of provisions ran low. A few handfuls of rice and two or three chickens were all that remained, and to add to the sufferings of those days the fathers had the anxiety of seeing the hour fixed for their arrival in Melinto come closer and closer with no certainty that they would be able to leave Kio Tao in time to meet Bishop Berneux's envoys. They would certainly be too late unless the junk soon put to sea, so at the close of the eighth day the missionaries forced the sailors to raise anchor, although the storm still raged. They worked tirelessly, helping to manage the junk and even directing its course, but after hours of struggle they, as well as the seamen, were only too glad to creep back to the inhospitable shelter of Kio Tao. The next day the wind was more favorable, but the sea was still rough, and the Chinamen refused to leave the island; and on the following day they began to complain that they could not work unfed. "Eat all that is left," Father Beau-lieu told them, "but if after your breakfast you do not try once more to reach Melinto we will not pay you half as much as we promised." The men ate ravenously, all the while raising objec-

tions to doing their dangerous work afterward. "But you are not afraid of death," they insisted: this was their strongest argument. "All men fear death," Father Huin contradicted.

A gift of money at length induced them to raise anchor in spite of an angry sea and a dense fog. The fog soon lifted, and all went well until noon when they approached a dangerous which it was necessary to double. Fortunately the wind was favorable and the passage was attempted. The junk was pitilessly dashed about by roaring, rushing waters which again and again swept over the deck; and a great gust of wind tore the sail into shreds and broke one of the masts. The Chinamen were in an agony of terror. Headed by the pilot they beat their cymbals, struck their gongs, shot fire crackers, and made many prostrations, all to placate the evil genii whom they thought to be hidden in the rocks about the cape. The missionaries invoked Our Lady as Star of the Sea; and once more she manifested her motherly care over the valiant little band. The passage was made in safety. At noon, on May twelfth, the missionaries reached Melinto.

A fresh disappointment awaited them: no boat was there to meet them. A red flag—the signal agreed upon—was hung out, but no response came from any of the junks anchored near the island. In vain the priests watched and waited throughout the long day and the night that followed, and hour after hour as the following day wore on.

Towards evening five mandarins boarded their boat to say that it must not linger in the harbor. The pilot proved himself equal to the emergency. He received the officials most cordially and was so generous with his nasty Chinese wine that they became very friendly, entirely forgot the object of their visit, and did not suspect the presence of the living contraband hidden in the hull.

However, the missionaries' position was still precarious. Their red flag had attracted attention on all the junks nearby. The Chinese boatmen knew that it indicated the presence of strangers—and to a Chinaman a stranger is at least under suspicion. For any Koreans to have learned as much would have further imperiled the already uncertain issue of the venture.

Day after day the fathers waited in ever-deepening anxiety. The pilot was determined to start homeward on May twentieth, and if their friends did not come before that time the missionaries would be obliged to return with him, making useless all their efforts, all that they had suffered, all the dangers through which they had passed. They would have to go back to Leao Tong which they thought to have quitted forever. But, at last, a small boat approached theirs under cover of darkness, and six Koreans, dressed in white, clambered aboard. They made the Sign of the Cross and spoke Bishop Berneux's name to give the missionaries to understand that they were to be trusted, and offered to take them and their baggage to the continent—the sooner the

better. At first the priests were overjoyed, but happily, before it was too late, it occurred to them to ask the hurried Koreans if they could show any letter to prove that they had been sent by the Bishop, and if they had with them the mourning garments which he had promised to send, as furnishing the best possible disguise. The men had neither; they were smugglers who had somehow learned of the coming of priests from Europe.

The missionaries did not know what to do. To place themselves at the mercy of such men was to risk the loss of their trunks, even of their lives; on the other hand, to return to China meant failure to reach posts where they were sorely needed, and for which, in their zeal, they longed with all their hearts. In their distress they begged those among the smugglers who were Christians to wait until the twentieth, the day on which their Chinese pilot was determined to start homeward. They hoped that in the meantime their friends would come.—And how they prayed!

During the night of the eighteenth they were rudely awakened by the smugglers, who had come to say that the missionaries must come with them at once or not at all, as they were in a hurry to return. After much persuasion the men agreed to wait until the following evening. As soon as day dawned the four priests landed and made a tour of the little island to see if they could find shelter there. It was a desert. To prevent the

Chinese from settling on it the Korean custom-house officials had destroyed all vegetation.

That long, anxious day crept by, and no help came. It was necessary to decide what should be done for this time the smugglers really intended to go. The missionaries were divided as to their wiser course. Two of them thought that it would be far better to return; the other two had resolved to abandon themselves to the mercy of the smugglers, desperate men though they were. All were determined to make as many delays as possible, to hope to the last for Bishop Berneux's men, to pray unceasingly, and to leave the outcome in God's hands. At the eleventh hour their confidence was rewarded. The long expected boat arrived! The fathers hurriedly wrote a few lines to Bishop Verrolles and to Father Albrand and confided the letters to the Chinese pilot. Half an hour afterward they were on their way to Korea, softly singing the *Te Deum*.

Soon they donned the mourning garments sent by the Bishop, which would be a great safeguard, as Korean custom forbade anyone to look into the faces of those wearing them. The clothes were peculiar and very ugly. The wide trousers were made of a coarse, dark material not unlike sacking and fastened at the knee with strange garters. An ample mantle of the same cloth fell from the shoulders. Straw sandals protected, or rather, were supposed to protect the feet. The hair was gathered on top of the head, rolled around and round, and made to stand upright

by a band woven of horsehair. Over this coiffure was worn an immense cone-shaped hat, eighteen inches high and a yard and a half in diameter. The brim reached to the elbows, and the whole looked like the roof of a pigeon house. A fan, made of a piece of cloth attached to two small sticks, completed the toilet. It was used to hide the face from anyone rude enough to glance at it.

But the missionaries' troubles were not yet at an end. The boat was small and made poor time—hardly fifteen miles in twenty-four hours. It rained, rained, rained, hour after hour, and they were obliged to seek shelter in a room under a deck which, being made of straw, allowed the water to trickle through it. The room was so very small—two yards long, one wide, and four feet high—that they could neither stand nor sit, but were obliged to crouch down, one almost on top of the other. It was infested with vermin; and as it served as chimney for the fire in the hull was always full of smoke. Of those days Father Huin wrote, "We hardly tasted food. We could get only mouldy bread a month old, rancid rice, and spoiled fish. One day Father de Bretenières and I carefully cleaned a dirty saucepan with our portion of water; then, having neither salt nor fresh water, we used salt-water to cook our rice, imagining that it would be palatable. I cannot tell you how nasty it was! No one could eat more than a few mouthfuls. During the remaining eight days of our journey we allowed the sailors to cook our meals and ate

them when we could. But not one of us fell ill." With the cheerfulness which characterized each one of the brave little band Father Dorie said, "In spite of our sufferings we were happy, for we were Koreans at last!"

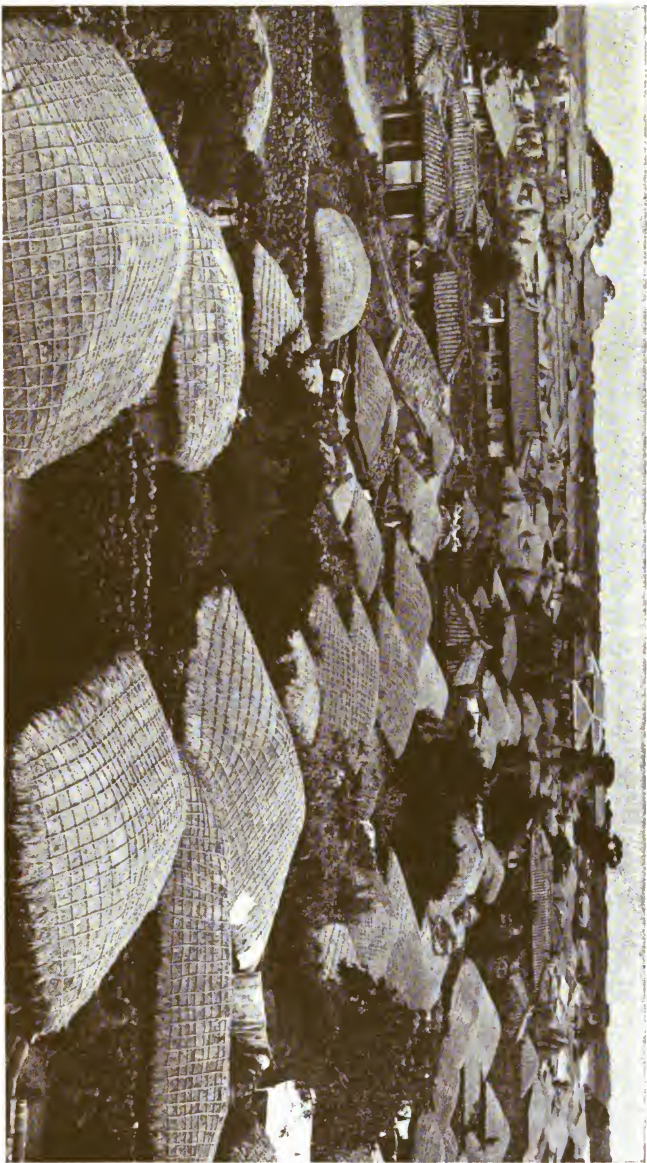
It was not these hardships alone that tried the patience of the missionaries. Delays had met them at every stage of their journey and did not spare them towards its close. They were to have reached Seoul in twenty-four hours; instead, on their sixth day at sea they were still going farther and farther from land. Bishop Berneux had instructed the sailors to bring their passengers directly to the capital, but on approaching it they had learned that two vessels, suspected of having had dealings with the Chinese, had been carefully searched. Greatly alarmed, not for themselves alone but for their families, they made what haste they could to reach their own neighborhood, much farther north, and in the heart of the most Christian part of Korea. There they would be among friends on landing their passengers.

It was not until the evening of May twenty-seventh, 1865, that the fathers touched Korean soil, after an often interrupted journey of ten months. They disembarked in a swamp not far from Nai Po, a village almost entirely Christian. In some unaccountable way everyone had learned that four more Catholic missionaries were attempting to enter the country; nevertheless the faithful of Nai Po were astonished to see them,

having had no intimation where they would land. Already tried by persecution and very timid, they feared that the presence of the missionaries would draw trouble upon them, and everyone but the catechist hid in his own house. In spite of his terror that good man met them and offered them shelter. Father Huin described their arrival as follows: "Out of respect for our mourning the pagans whom we met on our way to the catechist's house stepped aside to allow us to pass and dared not look into our faces. We, in our joy, could not help laughing behind our veils. After fifteen minutes' walk we were taken into a little hut. Its mistress was grinding barley for her large family. Watching her turn the grindstone, as mothers did in the days of the patriarchs, I was reminded of Rachel and the other strong women of the old days. Conditions in this country are in every way as primitive as in the days of Abraham or Jacob.

"As for ourselves, we ate on mats in that poor little cabin and looked at one another smiling, and saying again and again, 'Now we are safe and happy!' Our good hosts prepared our supper with utmost care, and gave us pipes to smoke while we waited for it. We had rice and two chickens roasted à la Korean. We preferred water to the drink used by the natives. You may be sure that we ate heartily, having been hungry for days and knowing that at last we and our boatmen were out of danger."

After the meal visits from the Christains began; but soon the catechist, afraid that so many



UNDER THE THATCHES OF QUELPART
(A Typical Village in Korea)

people seen coming to his house would arouse suspicion, suggested that the priests would go to a cabin, used as a chapel, which was away from the heart of the village. Under cover of darkness their baggage was transferred and they followed it; and there they passed their first night in Korea.

The priests were disappointed to learn how far they were from the capital, and at once began to make arrangements to reach it. At the moment Bishop Daveluy, coadjutor of Bishop Berneux, chanced to be in the neighborhood, and hearing of the arrival of the missionaries hastened to Nai Po. He welcomed and encouraged them; and that they might more easily escape observation sent Father de Bretenières alone to Seoul and took the others with him to a larger and safer village.

In his mourning dress, head and face well hidden and feet half covered by sandals much too small, Father de Bretenières set forth for the capital. He reached it after four days' travel. The country through which he passed during the first two days was barren and unattractive; the hills were low, the trees far apart and stunted, and only here and there had rice or barley been planted in fields, where but few men labored and with the most primitive implements. One interesting monument he passed: the simple tomb of Andrew Kim, a native priest who had been martyred.

On the third day he reached a mountainous

region, well wooded, with fertile fields which were being diligently tilled. He crossed the Han Yang river and a stretch of sand some miles in width—the arena which his own blood was soon to water. The place showed traces of many an execution and must have filled his mind with grave, sweet thoughts and made his heart beat high with hope of the palm he coveted.

He entered Seoul by its southern gate, a broad one, made of pinkish white stones of regular size. The top has two stories and Chinese cornices with turn-up edges. The city was poor and ugly. Narrow streets were flanked by mud huts, all of them low and covered with straw or rushes, standing close together and at every angle, and for background a chaos of rugged mountains whose high peaks were covered with pines. Soon after his arrival Father de Bretenières wrote to the Abbé Gautrelet, "Here I am at last in the capital of Korea, the 'city of delights.' Do not be dazzled by its high-sounding name! Everything in this world is relative, and the delights of Korea would not enchant a European. Picture to yourself an immense number of mud huts, crowded one on top of another, and less prepossessing in appearance than the most miserable shacks in Bresse; and by way of streets, passages so narrow that two persons go by each other with difficulty. These streets are the city drains and are always in horrible condition. I leave you to imagine how unpleasant walking is in good weather, and how much worse when it rains. Fortunately new

shoes cost only a few pennies, being a kind of sandal made of straw. Fashion requires them to be shorter than the feet. They are not easy to walk in, until one becomes accustomed to them. When we landed the first thing I did was to fall full length, after the example of William the Conqueror; but I was not hurt, as the beach is covered with mud."

Bishop Berneux, whom Father de Bretenières joined at Seoul, was an apostle worthy of the early ages of the Church; a hero, a saint grown old in the Master's service. He looked tall even sitting, tailor-fashion, on the mat which was the only vestige of furniture in his room. He was thin to the point of emaciation; his shoulders were bent with age; his face, covered by a white beard, was the gentlest and kindest in the world. He had known exhausting labor, heavy cares, and untold suffering and sorrow, but was still full of energy and as light-hearted as a child. Ordered to the perilous mission of Tongking when he was young, he had written, "I am willing for anything that is for God's greater glory." He landed only to be scourged so cruelly that he was scarred as long as he lived, and to be cast into a prison which was exchanged in time for a bamboo cage. After twenty-three months of solitary confinement he was condemned to death, but a French naval officer obtained his pardon, and the martyr's palm escaped his grasp. He was to win it only after many years of toil and suffering.

Free, but in shattered health, he profited by

what was supposed to be a rest to learn Chinese, and was soon able to undertake the care of an immense territory. There were few years in which he did not travel more than two thousand miles afoot or on horseback, over poor roads, or in dirty, slow-going boats. And still his frail body, ill-fed and abused in a hundred ways, was always able for the work imposed upon it. He himself said, "I am astonished at the strength the good God gives me. Without being robust I go unceasingly from one end to the other of our mission, in cold and heat, in rain and snow, always half nourished and poorly lodged. But not once have I been ill! When I am quite worn out I rest for two days and then begin again my vagabond life, a thousand times happier than I ever was before I came to the mission." At last he fell ill with typhoid fever, but slowly recovered; with cholera, and recovered again.

In time the Holy Father laid the burden of the episcopacy on his already-bent shoulders. He was consecrated Bishop, with Korea for his field of labor. An illness which lasted for eight months made it impossible for him to go promptly to his diocese, and when he reached it difficulties innumerable beset him. When Father de Bretenières reached Seoul he had worked tirelessly in Korea for ten years, constantly in hiding, always in danger. Describing his life the Bishop wrote to a friend, "The axe is always suspended over our heads, and the least incident may inaugurate a bloody persecution. Placed as we are, it is im-

possible to have any chapels or regular meeting places for our Christians. On Sunday they assemble to the number of ten or twelve, sometimes in one house, sometimes in another, always as secretly as possible that they may escape the observation of the pagans. They recite in a low tone certain prayers which I have prescribed and listen to an explanation of the Gospel of the Sunday. The remainder of the day is spent in saying the Rosary, studying catechism, and teaching it to the little ones. To this is the sanctification of the Sunday reduced in Korea, but to allow the faithful to assist at Mass would be rash indeed.

“In September I begin the yearly ‘missions’ in Seoul, which continue without interruption for six weeks. Only once a year do the people see a missionary, but their reverence for all priests is very touching. The catechists make all arrangements as to the houses to which I am to go. When I reach one I am put in possession of a little room, with a Crucifix and a picture of Our Lady as its only ornaments, where I find from thirty to forty Christians awaiting me. Examining every one in catechism—the old as well as the children—preparing all for the Sacraments, hearing confessions, and administering Baptism and Extreme Unction occupies the whole day and part of the night. This is the only time in the year that the people can receive the Sacraments for which they verily hunger and thirst.

“The next morning I say Mass at two o’clock,

and all receive Holy Communion. I preach a little sermon on the necessity and means of perseverance, and then go to another house where a second group awaits me, and carry out the same programme there. I live thus for forty days until I am so weary that more than once I have fallen asleep with one sock in my hand and the other still on my foot.

"Besides Seoul I care for sixty villages. I give the same exercises in each one every year, with the added labor of traveling from one to another, across the mountains, through rain and snow, in uncomfortable stockings and straw sandals which soak up water like sponges. After working in this way for eight months each of us, worn out, goes home and passes three months quietly in prayer and study before beginning again the circuit of his mission."

One of Bishop Berneux's associates added to this letter the following lines: "His Lordship has not told you all. He has not said, for instance, that he suffers constantly from a painful disease, and lives on turnip greens and a little rice; that he often works twenty-two hours out of the twenty-four, and considers four hours of rest, which is the most he ever takes, as a shocking indulgence."

It was in the school of such a master that Father de Bretenières was about to be instructed in the work for which he had come so far.

CHAPTER IX.

LIFE IN KOREA.

Bishop Berneux had begun to despair of the coming of his new priests before Father de Bretenières knocked at the door of his humble little house. He received him with utmost kindness, and at once sent porters with sedan chairs for Fathers Dorie and Beaulieu, and dispatched a letter directing Father Huin to remain with Bishop Daveluy. The three young priests spent two weeks with their Bishop, happy weeks of rest, and spiritual refreshment, and preparation for the work and trials and loneliness awaiting them; then, Father Dorie and Father Beaulieu went to missions in country places, and Father de Bretenières, remaining in Seoul, was lodged in the house of a catechist whose little son, Paul Hpi, taught him the Korean language.

Just wrote happily, "I am living with a family of good Christians, and have for my own a room which Korean custom does not permit strangers to enter. It is the nicest in the house, but as you may imagine neither large nor elegantly furnished. It is twelve feet square, and between four and five feet high. The doorway is low and narrow. The ground serves for chair and table, and at night I lay my head on a piece of wood

and am in bed. I exercise my long legs by walking back and forth, back and forth, like a squirrel in a cage, and imagine that I am making delightful excursions in the mountains. But how careful of my head I have to be! Fortunately my bushy hair warns me in time when I am getting too near the ceiling.

"The national costume for indoor wear is very simple, consisting of wide trousers and a short jacket. Whenever a missionary goes into the streets he wears his mourning clothes. The food is not very appetizing, and is insufficient in quantity. A man's strength fails under a diet of a small portion of rice and barley mixed with small black beans, to which is added, according to the season, herbs or wild roots gathered in the mountains. The mixture is cooked without salt. The less said of the meat the better. It is forbidden to kill calves or young cows, and we eat only animals too old to be of use in carrying loads. Dogs are in great demand as food. The pigs are small, and their flesh is used only on gala days."

Just's apostolate began by long weeks of solitude. Until this time his hardships and sufferings had been lightened by the companionship of devoted friends; now he was alone with strangers who spoke a language which he stigmatized as "diabolic." His own view of the hardness of his lot is given in a letter to one of his friends. "I lead the happiest life imaginable," he wrote. "I am alone in a little room in the interior of a

catechist's house and never go out except at night. The solitude is good for me after the dissipation of a long year's journeying. I am tasting once more the tranquillity of the seminary, and realize what a grace it is to have these months of quiet. Later, I shall be obliged to unite Martha's life to Mary's."

Prayer, study, and visits from Christians eager to teach him their language filled his hours of seclusion. Accustomed from childhood to waste no time he wasted none then. Apart from his prayers the study of the language was his chief occupation. "It is much more difficult than Chinese," he wrote. "It will require at least six months' study to be able to preach and to hear confessions. From morning until night I stammer Korean with my little professor and the people who come to see me. I have been doing so for a month, but know very little. To give you an idea of the difficulty of the language it will be enough to tell you that every verb has from forty to fifty conjugations, whose use is regulated by rules so complicated that many of the natives do not know them all, and the oldest missionaries have but an imperfect knowledge of them." The punctuation presents difficulties which can be overcome only by long patient study and practice. A word written in one way is pronounced in another; for instance, ha-keit-sap-ni-ta changes its *p* into *m* when it is spoken and becomes ha-keit-sam-ni-ta.

Father de Bretenières studied with all dili-

gence, stimulated to extraordinary effort by his desire to be able to help the overworked older priests. His only relaxation during those weeks was to slip out under cover of darkness and go to see Bishop Berneux, whom months of low fever had so weakened that he had to be carried to the sick and could not administer baptism without pausing several times to rest. His coadjutor, Bishop Daveluy, was able to do his work only with the help of Korean medicines, and of the four remaining missionaries three were in wretched health. "But no one complains," Father de Bretenièrès wrote admiringly. "On the contrary all are happy, because God is signally blessing their labors. Many envy the lot of missionaries in Korea; if they knew more about it their envy would grow. Fortunate, indeed, are those whom Our Lord calls to this little corner of His vineyard. If I were less lax in responding to His grace it would not take me long to become holy here."

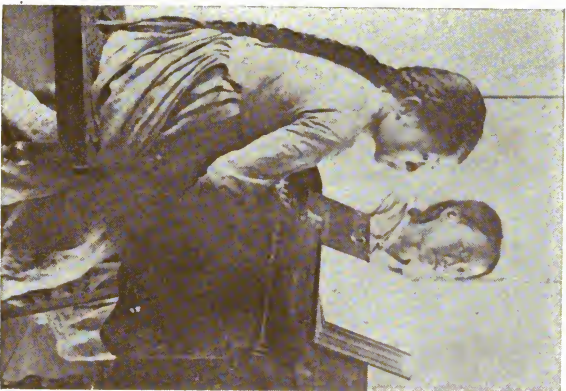
Towards the close of the same letter he said, "I have not yet heard or seen very much, but what has come under my notice fills me with joy and admiration. My associates are models of humility, sweetness, and self-abnegation. I have but one ambition: to walk in their footsteps, instead of being a failure in the midst of souls sanctified by years of labor in this land of martyrs. I could never say how happy I am to see something of a man like our Bishop. To describe him in one word, he is a second St. John

of the Cross. He despises suffering, privations, sickness, contradictions; in the midst of them all he is always joyous, always gay."

Numbers of extraordinary conversions encouraged the superhuman efforts of the missionaries. In one of his letters Bishop Berneux left a record of some cases, of which the following are typical: "A Catholic book fell into the hands of an old man who had already heard something of the teachings of Christianity, and it opened his eyes to the truth. He held an exalted public position whose duties were incompatible with those of a Christian, and at once he resigned it. Finding it well nigh impossible, even in his own family and among his friends, to be true to his new-found Faith, he pretended to be insane, would speak to no one, and lived almost entirely alone. For several years he persevered in this difficult manner of life without being able to receive baptism, for his sons, suspecting the truth, would allow no stranger to approach him. I sent a catechist to his house, hoping that he would find a way to see him. He succeeded at last and baptized the old man, who died a few weeks later.

"A young girl, who longed to become a Christian, was given in marriage to a pagan. In her new home she said many prayers when she was alone; but in spite of her efforts to do so unobserved her husband's mother and sister saw her on her knees more than once, at night and in the day-time; and her sweetness, patience, and obedience were too marked to pass unnoticed. One

day the sister-in-law said to her, 'You have a secret which you are trying to hide from us.' 'I, a secret! What could it be?' the bride replied, laughingly. 'Laugh as you will, you have a secret, and it makes you different from the rest of us,' the other insisted. Certain that she could trust her sister the bride at last acknowledged that she had a priceless secret. 'I will tell it to you,' she said. 'I have the happiness of knowing and adoring the one true God. It was to Him that I was praying when you surprised me on my knees in the middle of the night. I dare neither lie, nor disobey, nor be angry, because God's law forbids all these things, and I am trying to keep it and to win heaven.' Interested and edified, the sister-in-law begged to be told about the true God. The light of faith was given her, too, and she became very fervent. The intimacy of the two young women was remarked in the household, as was the great change which had been worked in the but lately ill-tempered daughter of the house. Her mother insisted on an explanation and on receiving it she followed in her child's footsteps. The aged grandmother alone remained, and soon she, too, was told, and she, too, responded eagerly to grace. The four women were very happy in their new-found Faith and followed all they knew of its teachings, without allowing the men of the household to suspect what they were doing. The one obstacle to their baptism was the superstitious practices in which they were forced to participate. To escape from



Her First Quarter
T H E L I T T L E

A Future Orator
O N E S

Smiling A Welcome
K O R E A

them it would have been necessary to say that they were Christians, which would inevitably have resulted in ill-treatment and such close surveillance that it would have become impossible for them to perform any religious exercise. They decided among themselves that the mother and the grandmother should have nothing further to do with preparing sacrifices for the idols, so that they might be baptised. The two younger women would attend to all such things, praying to be delivered from the necessity.

"I could tell you of a thousand such cases, and how they would make you love my dear Korea, and how you would pray for us! Surely God has His merciful designs over this mission!"

At the time of which the Bishop spoke the greater number of the mandarins ignored the Christians; a few mistreated them, and the result was a marked increase of fervor among the persecuted. In some districts there was entire liberty, and the faithful wore little crosses on their breasts and met openly on Sunday. In localities where the laws against Christianity were severe and the authorities watchful the spread of the Faith was necessarily slow. Everywhere the missionaries' work was overwhelming.

A little later, at the moment in which Father de Bretenières and his companions reached Korea, the movement towards Christianity had somehow gained a marked impetus, and conversions were becoming more and more frequent. In the north, where the Gospel was only beginning to be

preached, there were many catechumens so eager for baptism that they did not wait for the visit of a missionary, but went in bands to Seoul, even in harvest time. Their one thought was to become Christians. Lacking teachers, they taught one another as best they could.

Two young men, cousins, having been instructed by a catechist, the more fervent said, "Let us not delay an hour, but go at once to Seoul to be baptised by the great Bishop." His cousin objected, "But our rice will die if we go now." "Do you, then, care more for your rice than for your soul?" the other cried. "If our bodies die it will matter little, if we have been baptised and our souls are safe." "You are right," his cousin agreed; and that same day they began their journey of three hundred and sixty miles in quest of baptism.

One of the missionary fathers told the following experience: "I often helped Bishop Berneux when he administered baptism, and saw rude mountaineers, old men and children, burst into tears when the saving water was poured on their heads. I saw women of seventy years who had walked a hundred and twenty miles that they might have the happiness of receiving Holy Communion a second time in the course of the year. How their souls thirsted for God! It broke our hearts not to be able often to break the Bread of Life for them, and to give them the helps disdained by so many Europeans."

Father de Bretenières's rapid progress in the

Korean language made it possible for him to be of use to Bishop Berneux sooner than had been hoped. After a few months' study he could understand and make himself understood.

To the Abbé Gautrelet he wrote, "I wish you could see me these days with my hair arranged in the strangest fashion imaginable, arrayed in wide pantaloons and a little white vest laced in front with heavy cord, sitting on the ground with my legs crossed, and taking long puffs at a pipe with a copper bowl and a bamboo stem more than a yard long. I am beginning to talk easily in the strange language of the country which to you would sound like nothing more than *trik-krok, trik-krok*. Does all this remind you of the Just of other days?

"For nearly a month I have been at work. It is baptism that the Bishop had oftenest permitted me to administer, and I assure you that many are waiting for it. Catechumens come in bands, and it is necessary to explain to them anything that they do not well understand, to prepare them for the Sacrament, and then to administer it. When there are ten or twelve to be baptized it takes all day without a moment of rest; but that is nothing, considering the need. Help us, dear Lord!

"Everywhere there is a dearth of missionaries, and the older men are worn out; so, you see, we need not fear inaction, and that is a great blessing. Thank the dear Lord for me, and redouble

your prayers for me and my intentions. You can imagine how much help I need.

“By the time this letter reaches you I shall probably be in charge of a district. With my mite of piety and of theology I should be appalled at the prospect did I not count on God’s mercy and His help. Ask Him that in working with all my might to gain other souls for Him I may not lose sight of my own, that I may truly live for Him alone, that I may strive to keep my heart close to His, that I may live the life of an apostle of Jesus Christ and die in His love!”

Father de Bretenières was working with intense earnestness. He quickly won the respect and love of the good people who went to him. His great height and distinguished bearing awed them at first, but his affability soon gained their hearts. The boy who taught him the language afterwards wrote the following quaint description of their guest and of his life during these first months in Korea: “In the spring of 1865 Father P. Paik (Father de Bretenières) arrived in our country. He was very young. He had a pleasant face, without beard of any kind. He was more than six feet tall, and had such large feet that no shoes could be found to fit him. When some were ordered the sandal-maker was astonished at the measurements given him. Being so tall he was not easily disguised and rarely ventured out-of-doors; this is why he did not go oftener to see the Bishop.

"He was very gentle, and very kind, and the sound of his voice was pleasant. He was careful to honor those in authority, and to be polite to every one. He followed all our customs. He treated his body very severely. He was affable to all the Christians and never had trouble with them, although he would not deviate a hair's breadth from the regulations laid down by the Bishop. He worked with ardor, was always in a good humor, and seemed to be unaware of difficulties. Though he did not have time to learn our language well, his pronunciation was correct, and it was easy to understand him. When he said Mass or took part in any pious exercises his devotion was so evident that all who saw him were moved to reverence him. Whenever he heard our confessions he excited in us deep contrition and was very kind. Although he did not have time to go to Hpyeng-an and Hoang-hai many catechumens from both places came to him for baptism.

"Without the permission of the Bishop not even catechists could go to his room in our house, but whenever he had the opportunity to see any of the people he was delighted and talked to them for a long time. Without showing the least repugnance he ate all kinds of Korean food. One day when they gave him some strange kind of buckwheat cakes he ate them at once, and said gaily, 'Is it to keep me from getting to heaven that you give me such good things?' He was always ready for a little joke.

“When autumn came and the Bishop put him in charge of the City of Seoul his joy was greater than I can say.”

In the last months of 1865 and the early part of 1866 Father de Bretenières heard about seventy-five confessions, baptized at least eighty adults, blessed several marriages, confirmed a few persons,¹ and administered Extreme Unction a number of times. Almost constantly shut up in his little hiding place, and obliged to be watchful even as to coughing, and sneezing, and moving about, lest he should attract the attention of pagans who might be passing the house, he did go out whenever a sick person needed the ministrations of a priest in the absence of the Bishop. Two or three times, concealed by his mourning garments, he even ventured beyond the city limits to administer the Sacraments. New to the country though he was, he was proving a valuable assistant to Bishop Berneux.

¹ By special privilege missionary priests sometimes administer confirmation.

CHAPTER X.

PERSECUTION.

Political events which had occurred in Korea in 1864 were destined to have far-reaching and disastrous consequences for the missions. In January of that year the king had died suddenly, and a revolution in the palace had placed the crown on the head of a child and all real power in the hands of his father, a despot with no love for Christianity.

In Korea, if a king is childless, he chooses one of his relatives to succeed him. At his death the royal seal is given to the heir if he is of age; if not, the oldest living queen becomes regent. But the king who died in 1864 left no child and had neglected to appoint a successor. There were four queen-widows in the palace at the time: Tcho, the dead king's grandmother; Hong and Pak, his father's wives; and his own wife, whose name was Kim. The ministers wished Kim to be regent, but while they deliberated the old queen Tcho seized the seal and insisted on keeping it. Through amazement, or respect for her age, neither the ministers nor Kim opposed her. The weak old woman then chose for king an unruly child of twelve years, son of Prince Heung-song-koun, an able, unscrupulous, violent man, who

wrested all semblance of power from Tcho's hands.

Heung-song-koun despised Christianity, but his gentle wife knew and loved it. Tcho, widow of the author of the terrible persecution of 1839, might feel that family tradition pledged her to oppose it. For a time the new government gave no evidence of hostility, but it was impossible to foresee the future.

So, at the moment that Father de Bretenières began his ministry, the Church was enjoying comparative peace, and the Christians believed that at last liberty was to dawn for them. Bishop Berneux, wiser than his children, repeatedly warned them, saying, "Do not be deceived; the tiger is only sleeping."

The fact was that the building of an enormous palace was absorbing the attention of the terrible Heung-song-koun. Two thousand men were being employed in the construction of this "Second Louvre." In accordance with the traditions of the country the royal treasury could supply no funds for the undertaking; forced contributions from the people must cover the expense. The result was arbitrary demands and exorbitant taxation which infuriated both rich and poor, although no one dared to protest. To have done so would have cost any man his head.

To add to the widespread misery, terrible rains flooded Seoul, and the overflowing of a river south of the city added to the destruction. Hundreds of houses were washed away; part of



A T S E O U L

1. Publishing a Korean Periodical under the direction of the Benedictine Fathers
2. A Korean Priest on his visit home

the palace caved in; the city wall, thought to be an impregnable defense, crumbled and fell; and more than three thousand people perished. No such disaster had ever before befallen Seoul. The people attributed it to the anger of heaven, provoked, they believed, by the wickedness of Heung-song-koun. Those rash enough to say so above a whisper were promptly put to death. An educated man wrote to the regent pointing out the sad consequences of his abuse of power. The executioner brought his answer.

The Christians should have been particularly quiet and prudent in this crisis, for the least incident was almost certain to direct the fury of the tyrant towards them. The tactlessness of a few was to have dire consequences.

In January, 1864, a Russian ship cast anchor in a little port on the Sea of Japan. The captain asked, or rather demanded, of the Korean government a grant of land for his country and the establishment of commercial relations with it. There was deep consternation throughout the kingdom, and the perplexed regent tried to make time by replying that Korea, being a vassal of China, could not take so important a step without consulting the authorities at Peking. He sent a special embassy to China, and the Russians disembarked to await an answer. Meanwhile anxiety was keen throughout poor little Korea.

In Seoul there lived a nobleman, Thomas Kim-Kei-ho, who had long before lost caste by becoming a Christian. He had clung to his faith,

but was timid and regretful of the past, and now thought that the danger which threatened the country offered him an opportunity to regain his lost social position and at the same time to win the gratitude of the Church in Korea. His plans made he went to see Bishop Berneux, and in the course of conversation with him said, "Do you think that there is a way to prevent the Russians establishing themselves in Korea?" "I think that there is," the Bishop replied. "What would you do if the regent should summon you to the palace to confer with you?" "I should go," Bishop Berneux answered. Well pleased, Thomas went away. He and his friends drafted a letter to be presented to Heung-song-koun suggesting that he should interview a French missionary who could ward off the threatening danger. The letter declared that an alliance with France and England, made through the mediation of a Christian Bishop, was the only means of keeping the aggressors at bay.

Bishop Berneux's presence in the country was thus to be tactlessly betrayed to the regent. It was hard to foresee the consequences, but they might easily be grave.

Thomas hurried to the palace and eagerly presented his letter to the regent, who received him coldly, read and reread the letter, and put it aside without a word. Terrified, Thomas fled to the country; and about the same time Bishop Berneux set forth on one of his missionary journeys.

The regent's wife heard of the matter and thought the plan a good one. She loved the Christians, and through Martha Pak, one of her servants and a devout Christian, had often begged Bishop Berneux's prayers and his advice. She said to Martha, "Why don't the Christians do something? The Russians are at our doors and the Bishop who might help us has gone about his mission work when he is needed here. Another letter should be presented to my husband. Believe me, it would succeed. Do urge the Bishop to return."

A second letter, written by Nam John, a man well liked in the palace, was more favorably received by Heung-song-koun. He discussed Christianity with Nam John for a long time, and declared that he thought it beautiful in everything except its prohibition of ancestor worship. Suddenly dropping questions of dogma, he asked, "Are you certain that the Bishop could save us from the Russians?" "I am certain that he could," Nam John replied. "Where is he? Is he in Seoul?" the regent asked next. "No, he has been away for several days." "Has he gone to the province of Hoang-hai to administer your Christian Sacraments?" And when Nam John answered, "Yes," Heung-song-koun said, "I wish to see him."

It was a decisive moment for the fate of the Church in Korea, and every indication seemed favorable. Long persecuted and in hiding, it had friends at court and even in the family of the

king. The regent had softened, the queen often prayed to the true God; one of the princesses was baptizing children in danger of death; the young king's nurse was a Catholic, and one of his uncles was kindly disposed towards the Faith. Surely toleration was at hand. The people were very hopeful; they even began to talk of building a cathedral.

Unfortunately, after the regent asked to see the Bishop there was some delay in sending for him, because of a lack of funds. The necessary money was at last supplied by a friend of the royal family. His Lordship reached Seoul on the twenty-ninth of January, but when Nam John went to the palace to announce his return he found that the wind had changed. On seeing him Heung-song-koun said irritably, "I thought that you were in the country with your father." "I came to the capital on business which you know," he began; and the regent interrupted, "There is no hurry about that. Go back to the country and stay there."

The terrified Nam John was tenderly welcomed by his father, an excellent man and a fervent Christian. "You played a patriotic part, but it will cost you your life," the old man told him. "When they make you sign your death warrant do not fail to erase from it any words injurious to the Faith." Nam John hid, but in vain.

There were several reasons for the sudden change in the regent's attitude. The Russians had unexpectedly gone away of their own accord;

the ambassadors sent to Peking had returned to tell that in the "Flowery Kingdom" they were putting to death all "devils" from the West; and Korean magistrates, sore-hearted because they had not been consulted about the Russian trouble, were determined to revenge themselves on all foreigners by seeing that the laws against them were enforced. They had gone to the regent with the cry, "Death to every European in the kingdom, and to all Christians!" "But European ships will come to avenge the foreigners," Heung-song-koun had objected. "Have we not put many Europeans to death, and who ever avenged them? What harm came to us because of them?" the prime minister had urged. The regent had weakened, hesitated, and come to a decision terrible for the Christians.

The storm soon burst. A few days later his wife sent for Martha Pak, who found her weeping and wringing her hands. "Oh, Martha! Martha!" she cried. "Terrible things are to happen! The Bishop and every European whom they can lay hands upon are to be put to death. All the officials are against my husband, and what can he do? Why was the dear old Bishop brought back to the capital only to be killed? It would have been so much better for him to have remained where he was!" The good woman wept uncontrollably for a long time; when she could go on, she added, "Dear Martha, hide yourself, for I should hate to lose you. Hide in some place

where you cannot be found. Tell the Christians whom you know to hide, too."

All that day and the next the princess was beside herself with anguish at the thought of the fate in store for the European priests whom she esteemed so highly, and the terrible consequences which might follow upon their deaths. But the die was cast. The soil of Korea was to be soaked with the blood of martyrs, and for many a day the terror-stricken Christians, in hourly peril of their lives, were to hide in their poor little huts or in the mountains, praying, praying unceasingly

On the twentieth of June two messengers from Korea reached Bishop Verrolles, bearing the following letter from Bishop Daveluy, dated March tenth: "We are in the midst of a violent persecution. Bishop Berneux, vicar-apostolic of Korea, was taken prisoner on the twenty-third of February, and since then five of his priests have also been arrested — Fathers Pourthié, Petitnicolas, de Bretenières, Dorie and Beaulieu. The others will certainly be found; escape is impossible. Already there is talk of executing the six who are in prison, and I believe that they will be put to death in spite of their French and Chinese passports. Whatever comes, God's will be done! My turn is coming, and I am begging Him to give me strength to face death as I should. They pillaged Bishop Berneux's house and secured all the money and goods belonging to the mission. Pray for us.

"ANTOINE DAVELUY.

"Coadjutor Bishop of Korea."

A copy of this letter was sent to the Baron de Bretenières by Father Wallys, who added, "Bishop Daveluy's messengers waited for three months before they could secure a boat to bring them to Manchuria. They say that Bishop Berneux gave his life for Jesus Christ on the fifteenth of March, and that the five missionaries, arrested soon after he was, followed him to heaven on the eighth of April.

"My dear Baron, there is little doubt that this sad news is true; however, as we have received no account of the martyrdoms by letter or from eye-witnesses there is still faint hope in our hearts. The messengers tell us, too, that Bishop Daveluy was seized before they left Korea, and with him three other missionaries whose European names they do not know, but one, I think, was Father Huin. The poor Christians have been trapped, robbed, and massacred, or have died of hunger in the mountains whither they had fled to escape their persecutors."

Further details of what had happened were gathered later.

Reaching Seoul late in January Bishop Berneux waited patiently for a summons from the regent. On February fourteenth two armed men presented themselves in his hut on the pretext of getting a contribution for the great palace which was being erected. Their visit alarmed the Bishop's friends who vainly tried to find a safe hiding place for the money and valuables belonging to the mission, all of which were in his keep-

ing. His Lordship refused to seek a safer retreat. "It is I whom they want," he said. "If I hide they will make a thorough search, and a general persecution will be the result."

After night-fall on the twenty-second the armed men returned. With the aid of a ladder they got on the roof of the cabin, and afterwards examined the inside of it. The ladder had been furnished by Bishop Berneux's servant, a traitor who, not content with betraying his master, denounced all the missionaries whose places of residence he knew. At four o'clock in the afternoon of the twenty-third the house was surrounded, and the Bishop was seized and taken before a judge. After a short examination he was thrown into the common prison.

At the moment Father de Bretenières was in the house of a Christian where he heard two confessions, confirmed a man, and blessed a marriage. Returning to his own room he learned that Bishop Berneux had been arrested. Not knowing what to expect, or what course to adopt, he merely sent the news to Bishop Daveluy and to all the fathers who had fixed places of residence. The next morning he said Mass for the last time. At dawn on the twenty-fifth the house was surrounded by soldiers. The catechist was arrested, but Paul Hpi, Father de Bretenières's little professor, was away from home and so was saved. At first the men pretended not to suspect the presence of the European priest, although they closely watched the house. No one ever

knew how Father de Bretenières passed that day and the following night, the vigil of his supreme struggle.

Early in the morning of the twenty-sixth he was seized, bound, and dragged away. When told of the arrest of Bishop Berneux he had asked what shoes he wore when he was taken, and being told those he used when saying Mass, he had exclaimed, "Then I, too, will wear my Mass sandals." And so he did.

A red cord, the badge of great criminals, was tied lightly about his arms and chest, and thus, in his indoor dress, head bare, and escorted by eight men, three before him, three behind, and one on either side holding his sleeves, he was taken to the "Tribunal of the Right," so called because it was to the right of the king's palace. He was led into a large court room, on one side of which were seated the judges and a number of other mandarins. The judges wore their official dress, consisting of hats made of horse hair with flaps hanging down on either side, and voluminous blue silk gowns confined at the waist by belts richly ornamented with tortoise shell or precious stones.

In the center of the hall there stood a chair meant for the accused. Father de Bretenières was placed in it. His feet were strapped together above the ankles. A rope was placed about his knees tying them together and at the same time binding him tightly to the chair, and his arms and shoulders were fastened to its back, so that

no matter what torture might be inflicted it would be impossible for him to move. Three torturers took their places on each side of him, holding their horrible instruments in their hands and watching the judges for permission to set to work. Near them, but separated from the accused by a curtain, was a clerk whose duty it was to take notes of the proceedings. Farther back twenty-four soldiers, armed with instruments of torture, were ranged in a semi-circle, and behind them a second line of soldiers kept the curious crowds in check. While a prisoner was examined or tortured the twenty-four soldiers always chanted continuously in low, heavy tones, to drown his answers or his cries.

From servants and from the executioners themselves details of Father de Bretenières's trial were afterwards gathered. On entering the court room he had found there his beloved Bishop, and to show his respect had knelt humbly at his feet. To the questions asked him after he was tied to the chair, he replied, "I came to Korea to save souls. I will gladly die for Christ," and excused himself from saying more because he was new to the country and still spoke the language imperfectly. After his first examination he was thrown into Kou-riou-kan, a dark, cold, loathsome prison, reserved for the lowest criminals. The place had no opening except a low, narrow door and was dirty and ill-smelling. Father de Bretenières was seated on the ground, and left there for the night.

The next day he was taken to another prison,



A T S E O U L

1. The Catholic Cathedral
2. In the Emperor's Garden

not so dark as Kou-riou-kan, where each man had a small cell with a wooden floor. A number of bells were rung continuously to make impossible any communication among the prisoners. The whole was divided into three sections, one meant for those not in serious trouble, the second for those to be sent into exile, the third for all who were condemned to death. It was into the last that Father de Bretenières was thrown.

According to the laws of the kingdom four examinations by different judges were necessary before a man could be put to death. In the "Tribunal of the Left," Father de Bretenières was examined by a sombre, pitiless man who never laughed, would listen to no plea for mercy, and to no advice. He decided every case as he saw fit. The regent, also, had intended to question him, but learning that he spoke the language imperfectly changed his mind.

For four days Father de Bretenières was dragged from one court to another, each with its terrifying equipment for inhuman torture. First he was subjected to what is called the *shienn-noum*. Armed with triangular sticks executioners fiercely beat the shins, feet, and fingers until the flesh was torn from the bones and the lacerated legs could no longer support the victim. Another day Father de Bretenières's body was beaten almost to a pulp with heavy clubs, and it is probable that his ribs were broken by the blows. He was tortured other times, but there is no record of the instruments used; however, an idea of what his suffer-

ings were may be gained from a description of the punishments in frequent use at that time.

A criminal was sometimes laid face downwards on the ground, and a strong man beat him across the legs with a stout club, four or five feet long and six or seven inches thick, which was narrowed at one end to form a handle. After a few blows blood flowed; a few more, and flesh came off in large pieces, and by the tenth or twelfth stroke the club struck the bare bones. More than one Christian received as many as sixty strokes in a single examination.

Another form of torture was inflicted with a thin board three feet long, and two inches in width, with which the sufferer was beaten on the shins. Ordinarily thirty blows were given, and as an executioner was expected to break his lath at each one thirty had to be in readiness for each criminal. A similar form of punishment was inflicted with very slender sticks, interwoven to form a kind of rope, with which the whole body was beaten.

There were three ways in which bones were bent or dislocated. In one, after the knees and feet had been tied together, two sticks were passed through the space between and pulled in opposite directions until the bones curved outward; then they were slowly allowed to go back to their natural shape. At other times the toes of both feet were tied together, a thick piece of wood was placed between the calves of the legs, and ropes were fastened about the knees on which

two men pulled in opposite directions, little by little making them almost touch. Again a criminal would have his arms horribly dislocated. Afterwards the torturer planted his feet on the victim's chest, seized his arms, and roughly dragged them into place. Executioners whom long practice had made skillful could bend bones without breaking them; novices broke them so horribly that marrow as well as blood poured from the wounds.

Another form of torture consisted in stripping the victim, tying his hands behind his back, and hanging him up by the arms. Four men then beat him with rods. After a few minutes the tongue protruded and the face became purple, and death quickly followed unless the sufferer was taken down and allowed to rest. After he recovered he was usually suspended again. At other times criminals were hung by their hair, with their knees resting on bits of broken glass, and as they hung they were beaten with sticks.

Still another form of torture was given with cord made of horse hair, which two men pulled across the legs until it cut to the bone, when they would shift their rope and begin to work in another place.

The length of time that these tortures were inflicted depended entirely upon the caprice of the judges who, when the accused were Christians on trial for their Faith, often gave free rein to their hatred and devised added refinements of cruelty too horrible to imagine. It

seldom happened that after an examination followed by torture the accused was able to drag himself from the court room. Ordinarily the executioners lifted him on two poles and carried him, limp and bleeding, to the prison.

Under torture Father de Bretenières kept his eyes cast down, and neither sigh nor complaint passed his lips. His silence astonished and angered the judges and incited them to still greater cruelty. All witnesses testified that after Bishop Berneux he was the most pitilessly tortured.

The terrible ordeal lasted for four successive days. He was alternately questioned and tortured until at length his patient heroism disconcerted his enemies and for very shame they did no more. Thrown again into prison, his wounds were dressed with oiled paper and wrapped in a coarse kind of cloth. On the fifth day he was taken back to the horrors of Kou-riou-kan, where the loved companionship of the Bishop and of Fathers Beaulieu and Dorie sweetened his pain. In the midst of their suffering the four rejoiced together that they were on the threshold of martyrdom. How ardently they had longed for it in their peaceful seminary days and as they journeyed Eastward or toiled among their poor people!

Days passed, and still Father de Bretenières waited, in darkness and dirt and noise, consumed with fever, and with no other bed than the ground for his wounded, pain-racked body. But even then his gaiety did not forsake him. He

made pathetic little jokes with his jailors, and tried to be kind to them—men whom long years of service in Kou-riou-kan had hardened until they knew no pity.

CHAPTER XI.

MARTYRDOM.

On the eighth of March a white flag floated over the sandy plain south of Seoul, announcing the execution of criminals of high station. A tent had been pitched for the accommodation of a mandarin and his attendants, and everything was in readiness.

When the appointed hour drew near four condemned men were led from their prison: Bishop Berneux first, Father de Bretenières¹ next to him, and after them Father Beaulieu and Father Dorie. Each was placed in a chair; his arms and legs were tied to the seat, and his head was held slightly back by strings which attached his hair to a lathe behind him. Over each man's head hung a little placard, on both sides of which his sentence was written. Just's read, "Paik, rebellious and disobedient, condemned to die after having been tortured."

Curious crowds had gathered about the prison to see the European priests go to death, and jeered and laughed as they watched the preparations. Bishop Berneux spoke gently to them.

¹ Evidently the messengers from Bishop Daveluy sent to Manchuria had been mistaken in thinking that Bishop Berneux had been martyred alone on the fifteenth of March, and his companions not until the eighth of April.

"Do not mock and laugh," he said. "You should weep to see us die. We came to teach you the way to heaven, and now we can work for you no longer. How you are to be pitied!"

Two burly men lifted each chair to their shoulders and four hundred soldiers accompanied the party. It required an hour to go from the prison in Seoul to the arena. The porters paused several times to rest, giving the Bishop an opportunity to advise and encourage his young priests. The unmistakable joy shining from each countenance irritated the pagans who watched them pass. "The fools dare to laugh!" they complained. Just turned his bright face towards one of them and said softly, "To die is very sweet."

The mandarin and his numerous attendants were in their places when the party reached the arena, and all the terrible instruments of torture were in readiness. The condemned were subjected to rough treatment as they were loosened from their chairs. Father de Bretenières, probably in conscious imitation of Our Saviour, said, "I am thirsty." A Christian soldier quickly brought some water, but a pagan who stood nearby would not allow him to touch it.

Bishop Berneux was called first, and soon his body lay lifeless, and his head rolled across the sand. Father de Bretenières's turn came next.

They stripped him of most of his clothing, threw water on his face and head, and sprinkled them with lime that they might not show the effects of the last struggle. His ears were folded

over and pierced with darts which were allowed to remain in the wounds. His arms were tied behind his back and a long pole was passed under them on which two soldiers lifted him to show him to the crowd. Preceded by three flag bearers and two soldiers bearing instruments of torture, and followed by two flag-bearers and three other soldiers similarly equipped, he was then carried eight times around the arena, the circles narrowing at each round so that the last ended in the center. Meanwhile a number of soldiers marched and countermarched in elaborate maneuvers to amuse the spectators.

On reaching the middle of the arena Just was placed on his knees. He bent his head forward and a soldier held the cord with which his hair was tied. Six executioners took their places near him, and at a signal from the mandarin danced about him, brandishing their axes and uttering unearthly cries, before they began to strike furiously and not very carefully at his neck. At the fourth stroke Just's dear head was severed from his body, and all the soldiers called out triumphantly, "It is done! It is done!"

The head was placed on a board, and two knives were thrust into it that the mandarin might turn it back and forth without touching it. With the head borne before them the soldiers again marched eight times around the arena, widening instead of narrowing the circles, until they reached the mandarin's tent. The bloody head was presented to him, and after he had

identified it, it was hung by the hair to a post, with the sentence of death nailed above it.

So did he die, the gifted son of a rich and aristocratic house, who had preferred suffering to all that the world could offer, and Christ to His fairest gifts.

Father Beaulieu and Father Dorie passed bravely through a like ordeal. That day, on a road leading eastward from Seoul, a servant of Bishop Berneux's and the devoted mandarin, Nam John, were also martyred; and in the same place Father Pourthié and Father Petitnicolas were put to death three days later. With them suffered a young Korean and a zealous old catechist who had served his Master long and well. Bishop Daveluy and Father Huin were martyred on Holy Saturday, March thirtieth, in a village far south of Seoul.

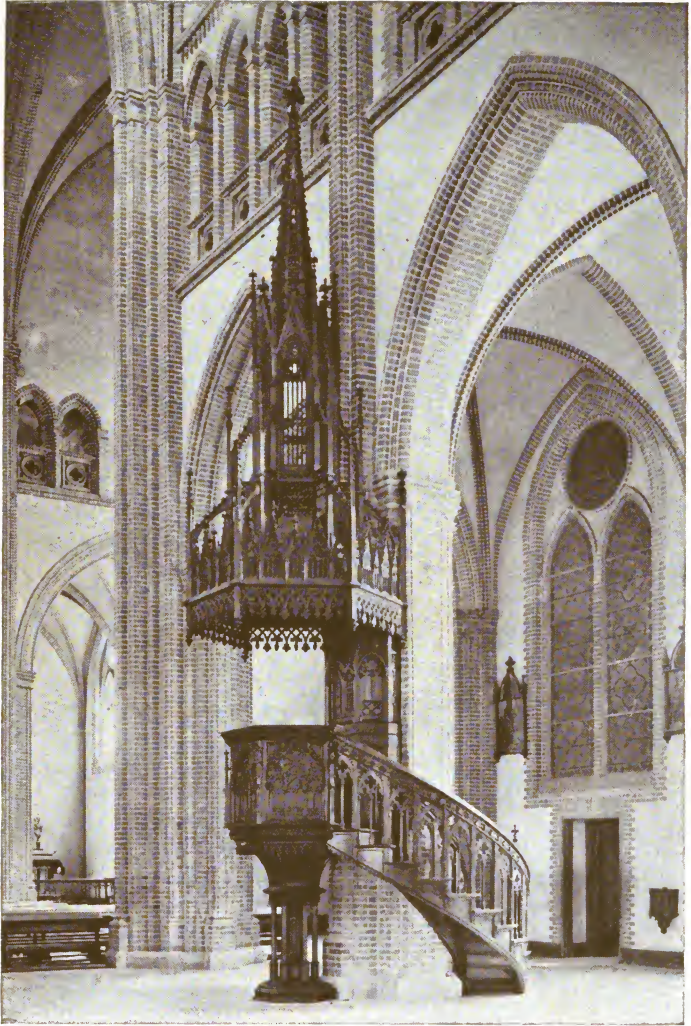
No one dared to claim the bodies of Bishop Berneux and his companions. Hour after hour they lay on the blood-stained sand, with no one near to weep or to pray. Ravens hovered over the spot, but did not touch the precious relics. After three days the display of the corpses was considered to have lasted long enough to impress all passers-by with deep respect for the laws of Korea; and as no one claimed them the people of the village towards which their faces had been turned when they died were obliged to bury them. The task fell to the pagans of Sai-namhte, a town not far from Seoul. They dug a big

trench and threw the despised remains into it. All was over.

Six months passed. The persecution had abated a little, and the Christians began to venture timidly from their hiding places. Their first care was to bury decently the fathers who had come so far to bring them salvation. Poor before persecution came upon them, nearly all of them were destitute now, but at the cost of untold sacrifices they collected sufficient money to defray the expense. Women set the example by selling their wedding rings, the only jewelry they had, and inexpressibly precious apart from their intrinsic value.

All being in readiness, forty Christians met one night near the grave of Bishop Berneux and his companions. They dug up the mutilated remains, placed each head with the body to which it belonged, hurriedly laid the four side by side in the earth once more, refilled the trench, and rolled stones over the mound; for dawn was breaking and they must separate without being seen. Two nights later the same men went back, carrying coffins, shrouds, and holy water. Four graves were quickly dug, and with utmost reverence the bodies were lowered into them, while appropriate prayers were read from books which had escaped the rage of the persecutors. Each martyr's name was scratched on a shell which was buried close to his coffin.

There the precious relics lay undisturbed until October, 1899, when they were verified by the



THE CATHEDRAL OF SEOUL
(The Pulpit is the handiwork of Korean youths directed
by Benedictine Fathers)

Bishop of Seoul, in the presence of three witnesses who had assisted at the exhumation, and were secretly borne to the cathedral and buried in its crypt.

It was long before tidings of the persecution reached France. Late in the summer of '66, five months after the martyrdoms, English dispatches reported in a vague way that some Europeans had been massacred in Korea. Mme. de Bretenières was at Vichy when these rumors reached her, and was already keenly anxious when Christain hurried to her from Switzerland to tell her of a conversation that he had chanced to overhear there, which seemed to confirm what she had read. They went at once to Boulogne to be in closer communication with Paris.

On the fifth of September Father Delpech, assistant superior of the Foreign Mission Seminary, wrote to Bishop Rivet of Dijon, saying, "One of your children, Father Simon Marie Anthony Just Ranfer de Bretenières, member of the Congregation of Missions and Missionary Apostolic in Korea, has won the palm of martyrdom.

"Your Lordship will learn all the details that we know from the enclosed letter of Father Patriat's and the one which I have written to the father of our dear martyr. I dare not send my letter direct to him, and am confiding it to Your Lordship, convinced that you will know how to soften the sad news with all the consolations which faith and the hope of heaven can give.

"Use my letter as you see fit. Give it to the poor parents or withhold it, as seems best.

"I lived here with Father de Bretenières for three years. He was undoubtedly a saint. It can truly be said of him: '*Consummatus in brevi explevit tempora multa.*'"

The message could not have been confided to tenderer lips. The kindly Bishop went at once to see the parents of the young martyr, and with exquisite tact and gentleness prepared them for the terrible news before he placed in their hands this letter, written by Father Delpech:

"Yesterday we received direct news, from our dear Korea, of grave and important events, never to be effaced from the annals of God's Church. The designs of God are impenetrable to us, but by faith we know that everything permitted by Providence works for the salvation of souls. Let us, then, adore the tender Providence of God that every pain may become for us a means of sanctification and a pledge of eternal life.

"These, my dear Sir, are the details which we have just received concerning the recent trouble in Korea: Last January some Russians landed on the coast of Korea and demanded the opening of a port to commerce with their country. The government was greatly disturbed. As the regent was trying to find some means of keeping them at bay, and was personally well disposed towards Christianity, certain Christians thought that they had an excellent opportunity of serving our holy Faith. They told the regent that the two Bishops

of Korea and their priests would be the best possible intermediaries in the Russian affair.

"The regent sent for the Bishops. Bishop Berneux, who was working in his country missions and had little faith in the plans afoot, was not eager to return to the capital, but his presence in the kingdom having become officially known he was obliged to obey the summons.

"By the time he reached Seoul the Russians had disappeared, and with them the fears of the Government. About the court there were mandarins intensely hostile to Christianity who, seeing the Bishop made easy prey, urged that he and his priests be seized. The regent objected at first, but ended by supporting them, and Bishop Berneux was taken prisoner. Orders were given to arrest Bishop Daveluy and a number of missionaries whose hiding places had been revealed by a traitor. Soon both Bishops and all but three of the priests were in the hands of persecutors who, blind to the consequences of their folly, were determined to stop at nothing. So the Bishops and seven of their priests were martyred.

"We have not yet heard all details, but we know that on the eighth of March Bishop Berneux, Father Dorie and Father Beaulieu, and one other, were put to death; that on the eleventh Father Pourthié and Father Petitnicolas followed them to heaven; and last of all, on the thirtieth of the same month, Bishop Daveluy was martyred with Fathers Aumaître and Huin.

"We know, too, that these nine confessors of

the Faith went to their death with a calmness and joy evident even to the pagans, so happy were they to leave this vale of tears for the arms of their Heavenly Father.

"I have named all but one of our venerated martyrs. I have hesitated to say his name, knowing the depth of a father's and of a mother's love. Your own hearts have uttered the word I dared not say.

"Perhaps I should have counted absolutely on your faith and unhesitatingly have placed your beloved son in the band of our holy martyrs. The day that Father Just was arrested he had baptized twenty-five catechumens.

"These, my dear Sir, are the only details which we know now.

"I beg Our Saviour and the Queen of Martyrs to soften for you and yours the grief which this news must cause. Faith will teach you, in time, to thank God for the great glory which He has deigned to bestow upon your child.

"In the love our Our Lord Jesus Christ and in memory of our dear martyr accept for yourself and all your family the expression of my respectful affection and entire devotion.

"DELPECH,
"Missionary Apostolic."

After he and his wife had read this letter together the poor old father wept uncontrollably. Many, many times he had renewed the sacrifice of his son to God; still, deep in his heart the

hope of seeing him again would not die. He knew now that this could never be. And what torture had preceded Just's death? And where did his body rest? The mother could not weep. Bishop Rivet said a few words of comfort, and soon the broken-hearted old father and mother knelt together at his feet and in voices broken by sobs murmured the *Te Deum*.

Soon letters poured into their hands from Paris and from the Orient, bringing tribute after tribute of love and admiration for Just: sweet comfort for their aching hearts. How those letters were treasured! read and reread a hundred times, until they were known word for word!

A beautiful little incident, cherished by all lovers of Just, was also a solace to them in the hard days of their first grief. It seems that when he was nine or ten years of age the boy planted a rose bush in the grounds adjoining the convent of the Sisters of Charity in Dijon. It lived, but never bloomed. The sisters treasured it as a souvenir of Just and would not permit the gardener to uproot it. To everyone's amazement, early in the spring of 1866, four buds appeared upon it, and in time four lovely roses!

CHAPTER XII.

THE RENDEZVOUS.

While he was at the Foreign Mission Seminary Just had written to his parents: "The few days that we have to spend in this world will pass quickly, and how happy we shall be when we are reunited in heaven, never to part again, and loving one another in Our Lord, without uneasiness or fear of the future."

The Baron de Bretenières was the first to join his son. He died in January, 1882, at the age of seventy-eight. After four lonely years his wife slipped peacefully away, not long before her eightieth birthday. Only Christian remained. He had been for years Superior of St. Francis de Sales College in Dijon when he died, an old man, deeply revered and loved.

The family was reunited at last.

APPENDIX.

It is to Bishop Daveluy's unwearied efforts that we owe the interesting story of the Church in Korea. Sent there in 1845, for twenty years he collected everything that could be found relating to the establishment and growth of Christianity, and many anecdotes of its times of trial, its confessors, and its martyrs. Fortunately his notes were sent to France some months before the outbreak of the persecution which counted him among its victims.

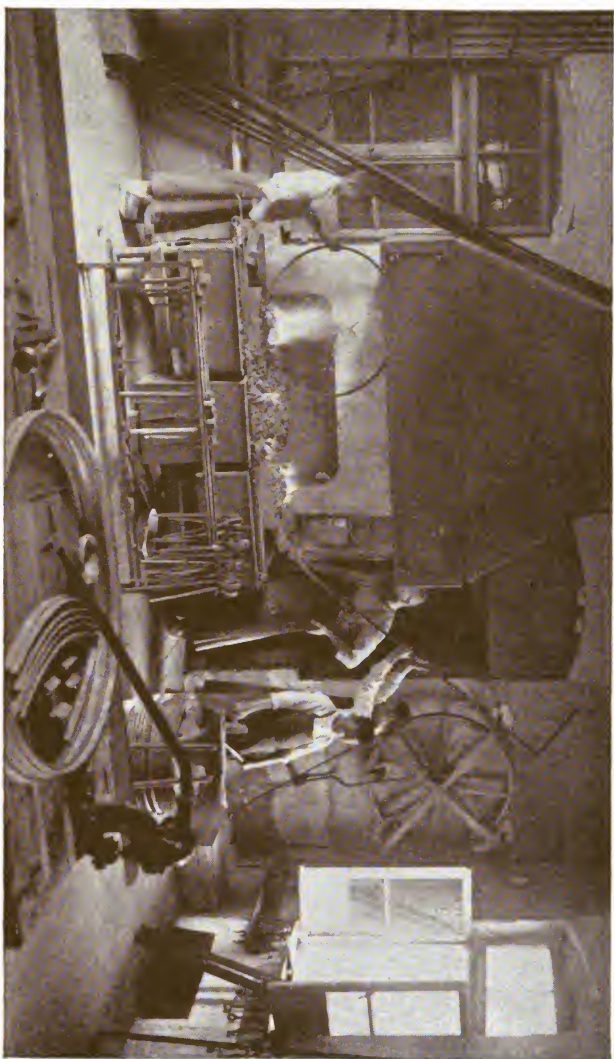
Korea is a mountainous peninsula parallel to the eastern coast of China. It is three hundred miles in length and a hundred in width. A vassal of China until 1895, in that year the treaty of Shimonoseki placed it under the protection of Japan; but it was always an autonomous kingdom, with a language and customs materially different from those of either China or Japan. Until long after Father de Bretenières's brief day there the government jealously isolated the country from the rest of the world.

In 1860 China was forcibly opened to European commerce, but the Powers made no effort to enter into negotiations with inhospitable Korea, and six years later Catholic missionaries were still the only Europeans who, at the risk of their lives, had succeeded in settling there.

Nevertheless the Koreans have always been singularly well disposed to receive the good seed of the Gospel. In other pagan lands the Church has made its way almost entirely through the children in Catholic schools and orphanages. In Korea men—the intellectuals of the country—were the first converts, and its evangelization was unique in the history, not only of modern missions, but of Christianity.

The world marvels at the constancy of the Japanese who guarded the Faith through two centuries of persecution, carefully transmitting its essentials to their descendents. They did this without priests, or any Sacrament except baptism, until Japan opened her doors to the world and missionaries again flocked into the country. But Japan had received the Faith from St. Francis Xavier, and for a century Christianity had flourished there. When it was persecuted, almost to extinction, the faithful who so tenaciously clung to it had a precious legacy of Christian traditions and many examples of holiness to strengthen them in long generations of isolation.

The story of Korea is entirely different, and even more extraordinary. A country cut off from the rest of the world, it had never seen a priest. Towards the end of the eighteenth century some of its scholars accidentally came across Catholic books written in Chinese and brought them into Korea with a number of scientific works. In 1783 one of these scholars, Peter Seng-Houn-i, was a member of the embassy which Korea sent an-



A WORKROOM IN THE BENEDICTINE TRADE SCHOOL, SEOUL

nually to Peking, and while there he became acquainted with Bishop Alexander de Govea, a Portuguese Franciscan, and was baptized by him.

On returning to his own country he took with him religious books, crucifixes, and pictures, which he distributed among his friends; and with the aid of Piek-i and a few other earnest men he endeavored to spread the knowledge of the Faith, appealing particularly to the most learned and thoughtful men of the country. The fervent catechists invited public discussions with followers of other religions, and these debates redounded to the honor of Christianity, and gave it an assured position in the world of letters. Thence it was diffused among the middle and lower classes.

The catechumens baptized by Peter Seng-Houn-i baptized others. Books, written by Chinese missionaries, were translated into Korean; the neophytes were taught Christian practices—the sanctification of Sunday, the observance of days of fast and abstinence, even the rigors of asceticism; and the Christian laws regarding marriage were inculcated to the best of the catechists' ability. In a word, a society of the faithful was established, attached to the church in China by baptism: and all through the zeal of one convert, a layman, and not thoroughly instructed.

Such a beginning was marvelous; the sequel was even more so.

The infant Church of Korea waited ten years for the first Catholic priest who penetrated into the kingdom. Again and again the isolated Chris-

tians entreated the Bishop of Peking to send them priests, but he was unable to do so. Longing for spiritual help, and in their ignorance not understanding that they could not transmit the priesthood even as they conferred baptism, they consecrated a bishop and ordained several priests, according to the ceremonies which Peter Seng-Houn-i had witnessed in Peking, and very carefully made altar vessels for the celebration of Mass.

Hearing of all this the Bishop of Peking at once wrote to them explaining their mistake, and with childlike docility the so-called priests obeyed him and they and their fellow Christians renewed their entreaties for help from China. They were destined to pass through great trials before it reached them.

The slender theological knowledge which had permitted the heads of this little community to take upon themselves the priesthood was equally at fault in regard to their duty concerning the ceremonies held in honor of their ancestors. The rites practiced in China had, after much controversy, been condemned by the Holy See as savoring of idolatry. Those in use in Korea were but slightly different, and the people's attachment to them not less strong.

When instructions on this point came from Peking the Korean Christians had no alternative but to renounce the ancient rites as dear to them as their beloved dead. A few gave up the Church. The rest submitted, but the spread of

the Faith was arrested, and in the eyes of the pagans Christianity was henceforth synonymous with impiety. The abhorrence which the new religion had aroused in certain quarters then found a plausible pretext to employ merciless measures for stamping it out.

The first persecution began in 1791, and the consistency of the neophytes under torture was admirable. There were apostasies; even some who had endured tortures afterwards yielded to the entreaties of their relatives, or the fear of involving all their household in a common ruin: but many gloriously repaired the weakness of a few and won the palm of martyrdom. The examinations at which the Christians were questioned concerning their belief were always accompanied by torture, and attracted numberless spectators, whose attention was thus forcibly drawn to the teachings of the Church. More than once even the judges expressed reluctant admiration of what they heard, and conversions dated from those sublime instructions delivered on the rack.

Thus was the Korean Church prepared in tears and blood to receive the priest who came at last: Father James Tsiou, a Chinaman, sent in 1784, exactly ten years after the baptism of the first Korean convert. On his arrival he found more than four thousand Christians, many of whom were living most devoutly. His ministry was as fruitful as it was difficult and dangerous. The general persecution had ceased, because the king

was opposed to violent measures, but through the cruelty or greed of certain mandarins Christians were still put to death in some parts of the country.

The death of the king in 1799, and the establishment of a regency intensely hostile to the Church, was soon followed by a general and most cruel persecution. The avowed determination of the government was to exterminate the new sect. Well knowing the hatred of the authorities for foreigners Father Tsiou gave himself up, hoping thus to ward off the danger threatening his people. After enduring horrible tortures he was beheaded in May, 1801.

But his death did not appease the enemies of Christianity. The number of victims is not known, but it is certain that in the capital alone more than three hundred men and women, of every age and condition, were put to death. From time to time the authorities wearied of their bloody work and persecution ceased for a while, only to be renewed with increased violence. Few years passed without seeing Christians imprisoned for their Faith, tortured, and either exiled, put to death, or allowed to die of hunger and neglect in loathsome prisons.

Summarized, the early history of the Church in Korea is as follows: founded in 1784 by Peter Seng-Houn-i, it waited ten years for the arrival of a priest; until 1831 for the establishment of a Vicariate Apostolic; and until 1836 for its first European missionary—Father Maubant. During

these fifty-two years it had no external assistance, except that given it by the ministry of Father Tsiou, which lasted for five years. For forty-seven years it carried on its work without priests, without any Sacrament but baptism, with no preaching but that of catechists; it passed through the general persecutions of 1791, 1801, 1815, and 1827; and it gave to the Church more than a thousand martyrs and uncounted examples of exalted virtue.

Again and again the poor isolated Koreans sent touching addresses to the Sovereign Pontiff, begging him to send them priests. Pius VII received such a petition at the moment that the horrors of the French Revolution were beginning to alarm the world. He placed them under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Peking; but the Church in China felt the effects of the storm that was devastating Europe, and the Christians of Korea had to be neglected. In 1811 Pius VII received a second letter from them; and then, imprisoned at Fontainebleau, his hands were tied. Still another petition, written in 1825, reached Leo XII two years later; and touched by such unwavering fidelity he charged the Propaganda to offer the Korean mission to the Paris Foreign Mission Society. Poor in men and in resources, the Society accepted the difficult field and chose Father Bruguière to begin their work there. He was consecrated Bishop in 1829.

The Koreans being incredibly prejudiced against foreigners, especially those who were

Christians, their country had to be entered secretly; and in three years of effort, amid danger and inconceivable hardship, Bishop Bruguière was unable to reach his diocese. His failure was due in part to a Chinese priest, Father Pacifus, who had penetrated into Korea and was exercising his ministry there. He filled the hearts of the people with terror by telling them that the coming of the French Bishop would be a signal for a persecution, and scandalized them by a life not in keeping with the sublimity of his vocation.

Thus Bishop Bruguière's already difficult task was made more difficult. He suffered cruelly from the hostility of his spiritual children, who continually raised new difficulties to delay his entrance into the country—imaginary difficulties, invented for that express purpose, until at last he was obliged to resort to extreme measures and to threaten with excommunication those who continued to make his apostleship impossible. The people resisted no longer and made ready to welcome him; but the holy Bishop, worn out by hardship and sorrow, died suddenly in Tartary, in October, 1835.

After his death Father Maubant, who had been appointed his assistant, succeeded in entering Korea; and another French priest, Father Chastan, soon followed him. For five years they labored alone in that field of martyrs, by their zeal greatly increasing the size of their flock.

In time a new Vicar Apostolic, Bishop Imbert, made his way into the kingdom, but the peoples'

rejoicing was short lived. A furious persecution soon broke forth. Imitating Father Tsiou the three missionaries gave themselves up, hoping thereby to save their flock. The Bishop, delivering himself first, sent word to his priests to join him, and all three were beheaded. The persecution thus inaugurated was more general and more systematic than any that had preceded it. Apostacies were few, and many were martyred.

The Korean Church was again without a priest, and more than five years passed before another succeeded in getting into the country. During this time intermittent periods of persecution further enriched its martyrology. Father Ferréol, consecrated Bishop in Manchuria, at last entered the kingdom from the sea, accompanied by Father Daveluy, and a young Korean priest, named Andrew Kim, who had been ordained in China—a man of rare promise, courageous, persevering, and very holy. He had already suffered much, so much that later, when arraigned before the judges, the story of his trying adventures drew cries of admiration even from his persecutors. "Poor young man, in what terrible labors has he not passed his days!" they exclaimed.

Bishop Ferréol found the Christians scattered and disheartened. Discipline had been relaxed, instruction neglected, and many of his people concealed themselves from him in terror. Everywhere he had to begin afresh. Father Kim was doing good work when he fell into the hands of some soldiers; and after a heroic confession

of Faith shed his blood for Christ with heavenly joy.

A Korean deacon, who had been sent to China to complete his studies, forced his way into the country, where he was presently ordained. Another French missionary, Father Maistre, came just in time to see Bishop Ferréol die, exhausted by privations and by labor too great for his strength. He was the third Vicar Apostolic whom the Church had lost in Korea in ten years.

Bishop Berneux was next appointed to the difficult position, and entered the country in 1856, accompanied by Fathers Pourthié and Petitnicolas. His first official act was to name Father Daveluy his coadjutor. Despite the continued hostility of the government and some persecution, during the years immediately preceding Father de Bretenières's arrival the Church in Korea knew comparative peace and made great strides. The Christian population increased to sixteen thousand. The people seized every opportunity of receiving the Sacraments, and were docile and devoted and zealous. Many emulated the virtues of their holy missionaries, and during the violent persecution which stained the regency of Heung-song-koun not only priests but several thousand laymen gladly died for the Faith.

Three years after the martyrdom of Bishop Berneux and his companions two priests, Fathers Ridel and Blanc, attempted to penetrate into Korea, but found the coast guarded at every point. Later, in 1876, Father Ridel, who in the

meantime had been consecrated Bishop, managed to effect an entrance with some of his priests. Of the condition in which he found the mission he wrote: "Several thousands of the faithful have disappeared, victims of the most cruel persecution ever waged even in Korea. Some died of hunger, cold, and disease; others, especially young girls, were sold as slaves and taken no one knows where. Those Christians whom we find are in a miserable condition of body and soul. Obligated to flee and hide, they lost their fields and homes and all their possessions. They have no means of livelihood. I am in hiding, surrounded on all sides by pagans. I dare not speak above a whisper and go out to minister to the Christians only after dark. So far I have not been disturbed."

Bishop Ridel had hardly begun his work when he was made prisoner. His life was spared, but after being subjected to ill-treatment he was taken beyond the frontier of the kingdom and forbidden to return. The more lenient attitude of the Korean government was due, it is believed, to the influence of Japan and China.

In 1880 only three missionaries were left in Korea, Fathers Blanc, Doucet, and Robert, and as they greatly needed helpers Bishop Ridel sent to their aid Father Lianville and Father Mutel, the present beloved Bishop of Seoul. These two priests, after one unsuccessful attempt, gained entrance in disguise, and for a time secretly ministered to the Christians. Bishop Ridel died in

1884 without having been able to return to his diocese, and was succeeded by Bishop Blanc, consecrated at Nagasaki. France now wrung from Korea the assurance that missionaries would be permitted to live in the kingdom, and this with pressure brought to bear by other governments, including that of the United States, inaugurated an era of toleration and of peace for the long-tried Church of Korea.

Soon a band of sisters arrived, and, to the inexpressible joy of the Christians, opened an orphan asylum in Seoul. Land was bought for a chapel and a seminary. When Bishop Mutel was consecrated—1890—the future looked brighter than ever before: and it has gloriously fulfilled its promise. Once the old enemies of the Faith organized a rebellion and terrorized the Christians, but order was soon restored. When Bishop Mutel took charge the Catholic population of Korea was 17,577; it is now about 85,000.

In a short article which the Bishop wrote for the Catholic Encyclopedia, he gives this summary of activities: "In each district some chapels have been built, with residences for the missionaries. In 1892 a seminary was built at Ryongsaun near Seoul. The quasi-cathedral church of Seoul was solemnly consecrated on May 29, 1898. Parish schools have been opened anew, or organized upon a better footing. It has been possible to open in the great centers a few schools for girls, a thing which Korean usage would never before have permitted. In 1875 the missionaries

published a dictionary and a grammar in French and Korean. The movable type then cast has served as a standard for all that is used to-day. The mission possesses a printing-house for the publication of Korean Catholic books and of a weekly Korean Catholic newspaper, founded in 1906, which counts more than four thousand subscribers. As a striking event of this period may be noted the conversion to Catholicism of the princess, the mother of the emperor, and the true wife of the terrible regent Heung-song-koun. Christian at heart even before the persecution of 1866, she was baptized and confirmed October 11, 1896, but in great secrecy and unknown even to those about her. The following year she received, under the same conditions, the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist, and died piously, January 8, 1898."

To the Very Reverend James A. Walsh, Superior of Maryknoll, the American Foreign Mission Seminary, we are indebted for the story of the conversion to which Bishop Mutel refers. Father Walsh has been in correspondence with Bishop Mutel for several years and recently, on his Far Eastern voyage in search of a mission-field for American priests, he remained for several days at Seoul as the Bishop's guest. During this visit His Lordship wrote for him the interesting story which follows:

"The prince, whom the Japanese call Prince Ri Senior, occupied the throne of Korea, first as king, from 1864 until 1897; then as emperor,

from 1897 until 1907, when he abdicated in favor of his son, who was dethroned in 1910 and has since been known as Prince Ri Junior.

"Born of a noble family, in 1852, Prince Ri Senior was only twelve years of age when he was chosen to succeed a childless king, and the regency placed in the hands of his father, Heung-song-koun, principal author of the terrible persecution of 1866 which gave us so many martyrs. Little as the regent suspected it Christianity had even then won its way, not only into the court, but into his household. The nurse of the boy-king was a devout Catholic, and his own wife loved the Church and believed in it. Shortly before Bishop Berneux's martyrdom she sent a message, begging him to offer a number of Masses for the prosperity of the kingdom, and while her husband was torturing priests and thousands of native Christians she was secretly studying the catechism and preparing herself for baptism.

"She was a Christian at heart for many years, and when, in 1890, I returned to Korea as Bishop, she sent to me begging for baptism. It was impossible for me to grant her petition, for notwithstanding her great age she still acted as mistress of the royal family and among her duties were the preparation of the pagan sacrifices and the defraying of whatever expense pertained to them. I was obliged to reply that she could not be baptized until she renounced all participation in the false worship of the court.

"In the spring of 1896, giving her advanced



THE MUCH-LOVED BISHOP OF SEOUL
Rt. Rev. Gustave Mutel of the Paris Foreign Missions

age as excuse, she resigned her place as head of the royal household, and once more asked for baptism. The eleventh of October was the day chosen; the place, a Christian maid-servant's unpretentious home, outside the grounds of the palace, but not far from it. I was the first to reach the house and hid behind the door of its one room. Soon the princess came, carried in a kind of chair which is in general use among the ladies of the palace. The bearers did not know her and suspected nothing. A pagan woman of the court, to whom the princess had confided the secret, accompanied her on foot. When the princess alighted she was greeted as Koreans greet an aged relative; only after she entered the house and the door had been closed was more profound respect shown her.

"The princess was immediately presented to me. She was simply dressed, and very simple in manner. Her sight had grown dim, but her hearing was perfect and her mind was alert and keen. We had much to say to each other, but there was little time for anything but the serious matter for which we had met. I asked her to repeat our ordinary prayers and she said them fluently, as one does who recites them often. I examined her in Christian Doctrine, and she readily answered all my questions. I then baptized her with as much solemnity as time and place permitted. A Christian, the daughter of the king's nurse, was god-mother. All went well, although during the ceremony we could hear the bearers of the princess'

chair wrangling over a few pennies just outside the door. Evidently they had had too much wine.

"When I poured the baptismal water on the forehead of Princess Mary I saw a look of unutterable joy illumine her face—a look which I have seen a thousand times on the countenances of humbler converts. Immediately afterward I confirmed her, and this time a Christian servant was god-mother. The ceremonies had lasted about an hour and we could not tarry longer without danger. I said good-bye to Princess Mary and hid behind the door while she went to her chair. When it passed out of sight I also left the house.

"The following day Princess Mary sent some one to thank me, to tell me that she had re-entered the palace without being seen, and also to ask for a dispensation from abstinence, which it would have been almost impossible for her to observe.

"A year later, on September fifth, 1897, the princess sent a messenger to ask me to see her that evening, that I might hear her confession and, if possible, give her her First Communion. This time it was arranged that I should go to her at the palace. In a chair not unlike the one she had used I left my house about nine o'clock in the evening, carrying the Blessed Sacrament on my breast. I was taken through a side-door to the room of a Christian servant. The porters having been dismissed I was led across several courts to the apartments of a court lady who was in the secret. On the way I narrowly escaped

running into one of the guards who make the round of the palace during the entire night. Each of them is armed with a long stick, bound with iron, with which he strikes the ground making a horrible noise. We stood aside in the shadow until he passed, and continued on our way.

“A very old lady of the court received me in her room where I found also the lady who had been present at Princess Mary’s baptism. I laid the Blessed Sacrament on a table which had been made ready for it, lit a candle, and awaited the coming of the princess. At half-past eleven I heard a slight noise and rose quickly. It was indeed the king’s mother who approached, having profited by a moment when all her attendants were asleep to have herself carried on the back of a slave to the room in which I awaited her. After our greetings and some little conversation Princess Mary asked me to hear her confession. I did so at once, and afterwards prayers were read to her in preparation for Holy Communion. Shortly after midnight I put on my surplice and stole and gave her Holy Communion. I can still see the whole scene: the aged princess kneeling before me to receive Our Lord, and behind her two pagan ladies of the palace with a humble Christian servant between them, all three reverently bent low. Such was the First Communion of Princess Mary in the early morning of the sixth of September, 1897, when she was eighty years of age. It was her last Communion as well as her first. I was obliged to interrupt her

thanksgiving to take leave of her, and never saw her again.

"Towards the end of the year she fell ill, but profited by a day on which she was better to send me messages, recommending herself to my prayers, and begging me, if possible to see her husband, the old regent, Heung-song-koun, who was also very ill. She hoped that I might be able to bring him into the Church. I had no further news of her until the morning of January ninth, when word was brought me that she had died the evening before. In any case it would have been impossible for me to be with her at the last. Knowing this she had told a Christian servant to stay beside her, and in words agreed between them to suggest pious thoughts until the end came.

"I felt it my duty to seek an audience with the king that I might offer my condolence and tell him that his mother had died a Christian. Some one's indiscretion had already appraised him of the fact, and fearing that I should mention it before the assembled court he refused to see me, sending word that he was unusually busy and would summon me later.

"I asked, also, for an interview with Heung-song-koun, as the princess had asked me to do. He sent me effusive messages of thanks, but explained that he was not on friendly terms with his son and a visit from me at that moment might get us both into trouble. Perhaps this, too, was but an excuse.

“Obliged by ill health to go to Shanghai for two months’ rest it was there that I learned of the regent’s death on the twenty-second of February. National obsequies — entirely pagan, of course — were held at the same time for him and for Princess Mary. For her soul she had only the portion of the poor: the generous suffrages of the Church and a few Masses said at the request of some humble Christian servants.”

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TRIBUTES TO THE FIELD AFAR

From "*America*."

The Field Afar, a monthly published in the interests of the Apostolic Seminary at Maryknoll, Ossining, N. Y., grows in attractiveness with each new issue. There are sixteen pages in this little publication, fourteen of them devoted to reading matter and two to notices and advertisements. A personal touch to all the articles puts *The Field Afar* in a class by itself. It is most readable and most instructive. . . . In reading the issue for April, we thought what an excellent paper it is to put into the hands of our Catholic children, whether attending the parish schools or the Sunday schools.

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Day after day we read of the departure of Protestants, men and women, to foreign lands to join the truly astounding number of active workers belonging to the sects in all parts of the globe. The coffers of their missionary societies are being replenished by organized efforts to secure contributions, be they ever so small, from all the churches that dot the land, and by the colossal fortunes that are bequeathed for the furtherance of the same inspiring cause.

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Bernadette of Lourdes



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There is a growing awareness of the need to provide a better quality of life for children in the world. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) has been signed by 112 countries, and the United Nations Development Programme (1990) has produced a list of 100 indicators of child development. The World Bank (1990) has produced a list of 100 indicators of child development. The World Bank (1990) has produced a list of 100 indicators of child development.

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